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Arab-Israeli Talks

PLO, Israeli Negotiators Reach Agreement on Issues

Issues Noted

NC2504132494 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1210 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 25 Apr (MENA)—Muhammad Dahlan, a member of the Palestinian delegation to the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, has affirmed that the two sides have agreed on the phased return of all the Palestinian deportees who have left Gaza and the West Bank since 1967. That is a total of 1,068 deportees.

In exclusive statements to MENA, Dahlan said that 105 deportees have returned and that the others will return in groups, the number of which will be agreed with the Israeli side.

Dahlan pointed out that Israel deported 68 Palestinians because of the intifadah while others were deported for different reasons. He added that the release of 1,400 of 8,400 Palestinians held in Israeli jails has not yet been agreed with the Israelis. He added that it has been agreed with the Israelis to release 2,500 prisoners two days after the Gaza-Jericho implementation agreement is signed. He also said that 1,000 detainees will be released after the Israelis complete their withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho and that 500 will be released one month after the withdrawal is completed. He added that the release of 1,000 detainees will be discussed after the inauguration of negotiations on autonomy in West Bank.

The Palestinian negotiators are seeking the release of all Palestinians held in Israeli jails regardless of their political orientation. The purpose is to preserve Palestinian unity, because these prisoners represent every affiliation. The Israelis refuse to release Hamas members, particularly following the operations the movement launched recently against the Israelis.

Palestinian 'Free Passage' Noted

TA2504184094 Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Report by Roni Daniyel]

[Excerpts] The Palestinians will have free passage from Gaza to Jericho, passing through Israeli settlements, and they will even travel on the Tel Aviv-Jerusalem highway. Agreement on that was reached a short time ago in the Cairo talks. Our correspondent Roni Daniyel reports on the agreement reached:

Inspections at the Erez junction will be reorganized. Inspection of vehicles and passengers will be computerized to provide real time data on those leaving the Gaza Strip, their destinations, and the time they arrive, so that by the end of the day we will know who is still in Israel. Four axes were defined as free passage for traffic from Gaza to Jericho. From the Yad Mordekhay junction those with permission will be able to travel to the Shoqet junction, and from there to Hebron, Bethlehem, and Jericho, or through 'Arad to the Dead Sea and Jericho. [passage omitted]

Besides those two southern axes, Israel has agreed to permit free passage along two other axes: From Ashqelon through Qiryat Gat to Hebron, a distance of 60 km, while the fourth axis links the Gaza Strip with Latrun and Jerusalem through Qiryat Mal'akhi. [passage omitted]

Those are the four axes that will link Gaza and Jericho, it was agreed upon in Cairo. They are called the free passages. We traveled along one of them today and where does it come to? Highway No. 1, which links Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, and from there they will travel through Jerusalem to Jericho, with all the security problems such traffic can set off, but that was what was agreed upon and the moment there is autonomy traffic from Gaza will cross here.

'Abbas Arrives in Cairo, Meets With Shahaq

NC2604094394 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0920 GMT 26 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 26 Apr (MENA)—Mahmud 'Abbas, alias Abu-Mazin, a PLO Executive Committee member, arrived in Cairo this morning. He met General Amnon Shahaq, Israeli deputy chief of staff and head of the Israeli delegation to the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations. Palestinian sources said the meeting aims to bridge the gap between the two sides' views concerning various points that are still the subject of dispute, particularly the legal jurisdiction in Gaza and Jericho and the control of the crossings.

Abu-Mazin earlier met members of the Palestinian negotiating team. The talks during the meeting dealt with progress and the efforts required to coordinate the Palestinian stances on the proposals to be presented during this round of negotiations.

Sources: Israeli Proposals Meet 'Some' PLO Demands

NC2604104094 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1005 GMT 26 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 26 Apr (MENA)—Palestinian-Israeli negotiations chaired by Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, and Amnon Shahaq, Israeli deputy chief of staff, resumed today.

The Security Affairs Committee and the Legal Affairs Committee met to discuss the remaining disputed issues with a view to reaching an agreement at the end of this week.

Khalid al-Qidrah, head of the Palestinian delegation to the Legal Affairs Committee, noted some progress in the committee's work. There is now a great deal of understanding on the main issues, such as jurisdiction over territory and over criminal and judicial affairs, he said. Once we finish with the agreement, we will present it to the Palestinian leadership, he added.

Palestinian sources have said that the Israeli proposals on legal jurisdiction meet some Palestinian demands, especially concerning the rights of foreigners in Gaza and Jericho and legal pursuits in security and criminal cases.

The sources say that some differences, especially those over the control of crossing points and the release of detainees, have yet to be resolved and efforts are being made to reach agreement on them.

Gulf States Said To Lift Israeli Boycott 'This Year'

JN2504104794 Amman AL-MAJD in Arabic 25 Apr 94 p 1

[Text] AL-MAJD has learned that Israeli goods have begun to flow publicly into the markets of certain Arabian Gulf states. Informed political sources told AL-MAJD that an Israel ship called "The Orient" [al-sharq] docked at 'Isa Port in Bahrain a few days ago with an Israeli consignment for certain Gulf markets. The ship's captain and crew were allowed to tour Manama.

In another development, a Jewish businessman of Moroccan origin, who is married to the daughter of a ranking Moroccan politician, arrived in Morocco. He held intensive talks with Moroccan officials on backing the Israeli efforts to lift the Arab economic boycott of Israel and open public channels of communication with the rest of the Arab Maghreb states. The Moroccan side responded to this request by stressing the need to lift the political boycott first. The Israeli delegation objected to this and said no real political boycott exists.

AL-MAJD has learned that the contacts Rabin's government is currently holding with various Arab countries will result in a decision by the governments of Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman to cancel the economic boycott of Israel before the end of this year.

Inter-Arab Affairs

League Official on Libyan Call for Emergency Meeting

NC2504135194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1220 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 25 Apr (MENA)—An official source in the Arab League has stated that the League's Secretariat is awaiting the member states' response to the Libyan request to hold an emergency meeting of the foreign and defense ministers council.

The official explained that holding the meeting requires the consent of 12 Arab states. However, he added, if two states agree within 30 days of the request, the meeting will be held at the level of permanent delegates.

Libya called that extraordinary meeting to discuss the U.S. sophisticated weapons deal to Israel, in addition to other topics.

Islamic Affairs

ICO Issues Statement on Bosnian Situation

LD2504210894 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1943 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Jeddah, 25 Apr—The foreign ministers of the member states in the liaison team of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] concerned with following up the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina is to hold a meeting on 27 April at the UN headquarters in New York.

A statement issued by the ICO general secretariat today says that the meeting will discuss the upcoming steps to be taken at the international level to halt the savage Serbian aggression against the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The statement says that ICO Secretary General Dr. Hamid al-Ghabid has called for this ministerial meeting of the liaison committee to be held as a result of the savage Serbian attack on the town of Gorazde, which the UN has declared a safe area.

The statement says that Dr. al-Ghabid will go to New York later tonight to meet UN Secretary general Butrus-Ghali and members of the Security Council, in addition to participating in the ministerial meeting of the liaison team.

The statement expresses the the ICO's anxiety as a result of the savage crimes which Bosnian forces are committing, even after they expressed their compliance with the NATO ultimatum.

The statement denounces the scorched earth policy being pursued by the Serbs, which can be counted as another example of their bare-faced disregard for all legal standards and moral principles, and calls for clear and unambiguous condemnation on the part of the international community.

It is to be recalled that the liaison team is made up of the permanent UN representatives of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Senegal, Tunisia, Malaysia, Turkey, and Iran.

Palestinian Affairs

Hamas Leaders Deny Secret Contacts With Israel

PM2504134794 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Apr 94 p 1

[Report by 'Ali al-Salih: "Hamas Denies Secret Negotiation With Israel"]

[Text] London—A senior official in the Palestinian Hamas movement has denied the existence of any secret contacts between his movement and Israel. He also denied that the initiative launched by Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq, head of the movement's Political Bureau, indicates the existence of such contacts or any change in the movement's policy and strategy.

Abu-Hamdan, Hamas representative in Tehran, told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that this information is untrue and designed to distort the movement's position.

Abu-Hamdan added that "the attempt to leak this false information is aimed at trying to provoke the negotiating Palestinian side into offering further concessions, especially as Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres stated after his recent meeting with Yasir 'Arafat that the agreement could be somewhat delayed."

As is known, contacts have been made in the past between Israel and Hamas officials held in Israeli jails, including Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, the movement's spiritual leader. On this question the Hamas representative in Tehran said that "past contacts had their own circumstances and were made with the detained brothers." He added that "Israel asked some detained brothers to convey messages to the movement's leadership abroad. Their reply was clear, namely that there could be no negotiations or contacts between jailer and prisoner. Hamas explained its position on these contacts at the time."

Asked whether the truce initiative to which Dr. Abu-Marzuq stressed his commitment means Hamas' recognition of Israel and a willingness to accept the principle of negotiating with the Hebrew state, especially as the initiative was announced in the wake of operations carried out by the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam battalions inside the green strip in 'Afula and Hadera and Israel's moves to tighten the noose around the movement in both Jordan and other Arab and foreign states, Abu-Hamdan said that "the truce that Dr. Abu-Marzuq announced does not mean recognition of Israel's right to occupy or remain in any part of the Palestinian territories."

He went on: "Dr. Abu-Marzuq's proposal is very clear: It means accepting a truce in order to hold free elections and, if Hamas wins those elections, it means accepting its program, which rejects Israel's existence."

Abu-Hamdan added that "Hamas did not request the truce. What Dr. Abu-Marzuq said was that, if Israel wants to extricate itself from its dilemma and if it requests a truce, we will agree."

Asked whether Hamas should extricate its enemy from his dilemma—if Israel is in fact suffering one—Abu-Hamdan said that "we are not interested in extricating Israel from its dilemma. Israel tried to extricate itself from the dilemma following its failure to protect its security after our operations, which hurt it, by trying to turn the conflict with it into an inter-Arab conflict, but it failed."

Asked whether the new initiative is not an attempt by Hamas to escape pressures which face it in Jordan and those which it might face in other Arab and foreign countries, Abu-Hamdan said that "there is understanding in Hamas of Jordan's and Syria's circumstances, because any harm inflicted on their stability weakens the Palestinian cause. Thus we are interested in this question, and the statements made by the head of the Political Bureau indicate that."

Asked why he is not interested in the PLO's stability in the way that he is interested in the stability of these two states, which are also participating in the peace process, Abu-Hamdan said that "the PLO is abandoning the Palestinian people's cause as a whole and granting legitimacy to that abandonment by considering itself their representative. What I am interested in is for my issue not to be abandoned. The problem with the PLO is not personal; it revolves around the nature of the settlement and the abandonment of rights."

He added that "Hamas' position is against the settlement and only accepts negotiation if that negotiation is going to lead to the restoration of the Palestinian people's rights to their territory from the river to the sea. But it is unacceptable to negotiate over something unknown that might or might not be achieved. This is what the PLO is doing. In this context it is offering one concession after another."

On the possibility of a meeting between 'Arafat and the Hamas leadership, as reported recently, Abu-Hamdan said that "our position on a meeting with 'Arafat has been very clear since the signing of the Oslo agreement, namely that we will not meet with him unless he backtracks on the agreement and returns to a struggle program around which all Palestinian forces can rally for the sake of liberating the land and recovering all Palestinian rights."

On the agreement signed between Hamas and Fatah in the occupied territories yesterday, he said that "this agreement is a field agreement prompted by conditions. It is aimed at solving problems between the two sides and averting Palestinian infighting. That is the essence of the movement's strategy, which prohibits infighting."

Hamas Officials on Ties With Gaza-Jericho Authority

NC2604084094 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 20 Apr 94 p 5

[Interview with Dr. 'Umar Salih Farwanah and Dr. Sa'ud al-Shawwa, identified as leaders of Hamas in Gaza, by Muhammad al-Hinnawi in Tel Aviv; date not given—interviewees not identified in response]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Al-Hinnawi] How will you deal with the new Palestinian authority that will emerge in Gaza and Jericho?

[Hamas] It will be a relationship of cooperation and sympathy so that we can rebuild the Palestinian house. But at the same time we will stress the Palestinian people's right to armed resistance because this was the only way to force the Israelis to start the Gaza-Jericho negotiations.

[Al-Hinnawi] And where will the armed resistance take place?

[Hamas] Beyond the boundaries of the new Palestinian entity and wherever the Israeli authority, army, and police exist. The Palestinian authority will therefore have no responsibility for these military operations because they will be carried out outside the self-rule areas. Gosh Qatif, for instance, is not part of the self-rule region. So it will be a target for our operations. This applies to the West Bank towns of Hebron, Nabulus, and others; they will be the venues of operations like those carried out in 'Afula, Hadera, Tel Aviv, and Yafo.

[Al-Hinnawi] After these operations, will your elements flee to the self-rule areas and, consequently, create problems between the Palestinian authority and the Israeli Government?

[Hamas] Those who carried out the latest suicide operations did not hide in Gaza or Jericho. The Israeli Army could not find them. Had the army known where they were it would have captured them. The torch of resistance must remain lit. This will make Israel feel that there is no use keeping the rest of the Arab territory.

[Al-Hinnawi] Do you have links with the other Islamic parties in the Arab world?

[Hamas] We must first make it clear that we are against all the terrorist operations that take place in Egypt in the name of the Islamic groups, such as killing innocent people, killing Christians, and thefts. We are for a rational and enlightened Islam that establishes genuine legitimacy.

[Al-Hinnawi] So you are against the liquidations that are now taking place in Gaza, something that I saw with my own eyes?

[Hamas] We cannot say there is a struggle and campaign of liquidation between Hamas and Fatah. Problems do appear occasionally but they are quickly solved. But those who are proven to be enemy agents tell a different story.

Hamas Reportedly Pledges Not To Attack Qatif Bloc

TA2604105594 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 26 Apr 94 p 2

[Report by Pinhas 'Inbari]

[Text] The agreement between Fatah and Hamas in Gaza contains a secret clause in which Hamas pledges not to attack the Qatif Bloc settlements, our correspondent has learned from Fatah sources in the territories. According to the sources, this reflects the most recent Hamas line—namely, that the organization will not obstruct Palestinian rule in Gaza and Jericho. The sources claim that this clause has created tension between the Islamic Jihad and Hamas, as well as between two Hamas branches: the pro-peace Ahmad Yasin branch and the branch comprising the 10 rejectionist organizations that oppose the agreement.

[A related report by Dan Avidan on page 2 of Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew on 26 April cites "Arab sources" as saying that "PLO and Hamas delegations are conducting secret negotiations in Cairo in an attempt to conceptualize the ties between the two movements on the eve of the Israel Defense Forces withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho" and that "the PLO-Hamas encounter was arranged through the mediation of Hamad Abu-al-Nasr and Sayf al-Din al-Banna, leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood movement in Egypt."]

Commentary: Fatah-Hamas Pact 'Widely Welcomed'

JN2604103694 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Station commentary by Yahya Rabah, Palestinian ambassador in Sanaa]

[Excerpts] The pact announced last 22 April between Fatah and the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, has been widely welcomed by all segments of the Palestinian community, both inside and outside the homeland. [passage omitted]

Against this backdrop came the pact between Fatah and Hamas—a pact that has been widely welcomed and that defies Israel and underscores the ability of principal Palestinian forces to frustrate those who are wagering on Palestinian infighting, which is preached by outside circles, including the Israelis.

As for the Palestinian opposition factions, no matter what their political persuasion—Islamic, nationalist, or leftist—there is an audible dialogue going on asking such questions as these: What is our position? What is our role? How are we perceived by our people? And, increasingly, difficult questions are being asked.

Regrettably, certain Palestinian opposition leaders are still locked in a vicious circle and spitting out old slogans that have grown out of touch with reality and are clinging to others surrounded by [word indistinct]. However, instead of losing patience, the PLO leadership should display a spirit of national understanding and tolerance. This is because the Palestinian homeland stands in need of all its sons, and it will take considerable effort to establish an independent Palestinian state. The easy way out and haphazard policies cannot hold out for long. The remarkable Palestinian journey from exile to the homeland will infuse the Palestinian people with an enormous measure of [word indistinct] with self and to slough off illusions and [word indistinct] false offensive.

Brothers: The Fatah-Hamas pact will create new mechanisms to promote further successes. We have opened the door wide for diaspora Palestinians to participate in the national march in the face of adverse and untoward circumstances. We may as well open the door even wider for a national effort inside the homeland within the framework of the state, entity, and independence.

Norway Proposes Donors Meeting To Discuss Aid

NC2504160994 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1510 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 25 Apr (MENA)—The Foreign Ministry has received a proposal by the Norwegian Government to hold a high-level meeting in Cairo in the first week of May involving donors of economic aid to help establish Palestinian authority in Gaza and Jericho.

The proposal covers all the issues pertaining to assistance for the Palestinian police and addressing all its needs once it takes over control in Gaza and Jericho in accordance with the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles.

Donor states met in Cairo on 24 March and discussed ways to assist the Palestinian police deployment in Gaza and Jericho.

Palestinian Manifesto Attacks PLO, 'Arafat

TA2504143394 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] A group of 23 Palestinian leaders from the territories, led by Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, today issued a manifesto expressing opposition to the concessions they say the PLO is making in the negotiations with Israel. The public statement says that any agreement which legitimizes Israel's unilateral and illegal actions in the territories—such as the expropriation of lands, establishment of settlements, and the annexation of East Jerusalem—will not bind the Palestinian people and its national institutions.

At a Jerusalem news conference, 'Abd-al-Shafi, who headed the Palestinian delegation to the negotiations with Israel, attacked the PLO and 'Arafat. He claimed that they are cut off from what is happening on the ground and that the Palestinian people will pay a heavy price for their mistakes. He also demanded democratization of the PLO and for the entire Palestinian people to be involved in deciding on the composition of its institutions.

Our correspondent Ron Nesi'el adds that among those who signed the manifesto are Ghassan al-Khatib and Dr. Mamduh al-'Akar, who participated in the Palestinian delegation to the Washington talks.

'Abbas Firm on Jerusalem as Part of Palestine

LD2204190994 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 22 Apr 94

[Excerpts] Brother Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas], member of the PLO Executive committee, stressed that the Palestinian leadership will in no way accept that Jerusalem is not considered an integral part of the future Palestinian land or state.

Brother Abu-Mazin, who is currently on a visit to the United Arab Emirates, said that the implementation of the Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles would take place next May. [passage omitted]

In a statement to the United Arab Emirates News Agency, brother Abu-Mazin said that the next round of talks, expected to start in Cairo the day after tomorrow, would be more intensive than previous ones in order to speed up an agreement. [passage omitted]

Sha'th Performance Criticized at Fatah Meetings

PM2504153294 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 25 Apr 94 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Fatah Tunis Meetings Criticize Sha'th Negotiation Performance"]

[Excerpt] Tunis, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Palestinian sources have told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the Fatah preparatory committee meetings held in Tunis last night and the evening of the day before yesterday sharply criticized 'Arafat adviser Nabil Sha'th's performance in the negotiations currently being held in Cairo.

According to the sources, al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, member of the Fatah Central Committee and PLO ambassador to Jordan, demanded that confidence be withdrawn from Sha'th, while Major General Nasr Yusuf, chief of the Palestinian police and security, attacked him.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim surprised participants by his reservations about what is happening in the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, as he was considered until recently one of the supporters of the course of the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations. Some observers do not rule out the possibility of Arab influences behind this position.

The sources also said that Sha'th was criticized almost unanimously for his performance in the negotiations and for his statements to the press.

The most marked criticisms aimed against Sha'th are his failure to adhere to the foundations, from which he must not deviate in any negotiations with Israel, and also his media performance following the al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre in Hebron, whether because of his statement that this massacre would not affect the peace process, or the permanent broad smile that appeared on his face, even amid the Palestinian people's grief. [passage omitted]

'Abd-al-Shafi Notes 'Loopholes' in Accord

TA2504082894 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM TIMES in English 22 Apr 94 pp 4, 14

[Article by Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, former head of the Palestinian negotiating delegation: "What Should We Do?"]

[Text] Pondering the current state of the Palestinians, which is characterized by frustration and limbo, one feels pain and sorrow. The national movement is divided, and the peace process has lost its credibility. Among all the factions there have been various views and conflicting efforts. As a result, the urgent question keeps popping up: What should we do?

Neither I, nor anyone else can answer this question. I believe there can be no answer to it, except through a unified Palestinian stand capable of making a decision that can win the respect and commitment of the entire Palestinian people.

I beg the readers pardon for reiterating already well-known details. But the sequence of events and their relationships need to be repeated in order to clarify the truth and make it possible to grope for a way out of our crucial situation.

The Palestinian struggle has, from the outset, taken upon itself to defend the right of the Palestinians to self-determination and to an independent state. Later, after the emergence of the refugee problem it became necessary to defend their rights as stipulated in the UN resolutions. Despite the human and material sacrifices of the Palestinian people over three-quarters of a century, it has been affected with consecutive setbacks. There is no need to go over the reasons, but they should not be totally ignored either.

The intifada erupted in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem as conclusive evidence that the Palestinian masses, driven by conscience categorically and definitively, reject occupation. Moreover, they will never relinquish their declared national rights which they express on every possible occasion. Despite the violence, Israel confronted it with a fierce type of bloody repression and measures that are incompatible with international norms and the principles of human rights. The world knows all that. There is no need to repeat it.

The Palestinian National Council, out of political pragmatism and desire to put an end to the warring and bloodshed in the Middle East, through concessions and flexibility unprecedented in the history of peoples fighting for their rights, adopted a peace initiative accepting the principle of two states on Nov. 15, 1988. The principle is based on UN Resolution 181 as a basis for negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis under the UN's auspices with the aim of reaching a just and enduring peace in the region.

Israel rejected this initiative outright, heaping incriminations and definitions upon the Palestinians. The United States, Israel's staunchest supporter, ignored it claiming it was insufficient. Thus, the real opportunity for peace in the Middle East was missed.

The Israeli refusal was neither surprising nor totally strange. For the dimensions and conditions of the Israeli approach in the occupied territories have emphasized that Israel has a claim to the area, partially or totally. It has clearly demonstrated such an attitude by employing a policy of land seizure, the establishment of settlements, the annexation of East Jerusalem and expanding its area with complete disregard to the Security Council's resolutions, condemning such measures and asserting that they contravene international laws and norms, as well as the principles of human rights. Such policy was also condemned by the whole world as being difficult obstacles on the way to a just and lasting peace in the region.

The Gulf crisis that started with Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and America's devastating aggression against Iraq under the banner of Security Council resolutions shed light anew on the Palestinian problem as an issue of occupation that has been going on for so long that it cannot be ignored. The United States proposed a peace process for the Middle East on the basis of UN resolutions 242 and 338. The nations of the world and the Arab states surrounding Israel responded to the proposal. The Palestinian side also responded to it, despite the Israelis' provocations, in order to prove its true desire for peace.

The Israeli-Palestinian negotiations faltered at an early stage because of Israel's insistence on continuing settlement, and its refusal to talk about the status of East Jerusalem, as well as its insistence on stripping the Palestinian government during the transitional period of any real powers. In brief, the Israeli attitude aimed at legitimizing what Israel has illegally established in the Palestinian occupied territories, including Jerusalem. The implication of all that was to obstruct the road to the possibility of establishing an independent Palestinian state as a result of the final negotiations. Israel aimed at emphasizing the stability of its dominance on all the occupied territories, that is the whole of Palestine within its natural borders.

The Palestinian side rejected this attitude because we have not participated in the negotiations to bargain on the Palestinians right to self-determination. That was the core of the negotiating crisis.

The US sponsor did nothing to put things in order in accordance with the peace reference "Resolution 242," which stipulates the inadmissibility of acquiring land by force, and the withdrawal from the occupied territories in the context of the peace accord. The US approach has revealed a supportive stand to the Israeli ambitions. Though this position was expected from the beginning, yet it become crystal clear during the ninth and tenth rounds. It became useless to continue with the negotiations. The negotiating team deemed it fit to suspend negotiations so as to have an opportunity to reconsider and reassess the situation in order to reach a clear and precise decision around which the Palestinian people could rally.

In the midst of all this, everyone was surprised by the Declaration of Principles, which was presented to the Palestinians as substantial accomplishment that would pave the way for achieving our national goals as well as realizing a just peace. The accord was approved by the Executive Committee and the Central Council with considerable reservations and a demand to implement its term in a way that is consistent in harmony with our national rights.

The accord has many loopholes:

1. It does not challenge the Israeli claims to the occupied territories. Israel expressed such a claim by usurping land, establishing settlements and annexing East Jerusalem, in addition to the measures taken in support of this claim and in flagrant violation of all international laws and norms. It is worth mentioning here that the accord is void of any request for Israel to halt settlements or to allow it to continue with them.

2. This non-challenging attitude to Israel's claim implied acceptance of a separate Israeli presence in the occupied territories, the settlements and settlers, with their separate legal and administrative systems whose point of reference is the Israeli state. This complete acquiescence in the Israeli claim. [sentence as published]

3. Many of the terms of the accord are open to several interpretations. This rendered the current negotiations

extremely difficult to implement and paved the way for imposing the Israeli point of view.

The danger of what is going on now lies in the fact that the Palestinian side has not raised the issues of continued settlement, the establishment of new settlements, the expansion of the existing ones and the establishment of infrastructures for the benefit of the settlements, especially when the UN resolutions and international consensus emphasize that settlement is illegal and constitutes obstacles on the way of achieving a just and consistent peace.

Continuing in the current mode of negotiations but heeding the views of opposition, which are raised daily, causes the deepest concern and wonder. [sentence as published] I don't think the leadership is aware of this grave situation.

I think we are at an emerging national juncture that makes it imperative upon all nationalist forces to join together to review the situation and reach a decision that might win the confidence and support of all the Palestinians, wherever they might be.

'Urayqat Heads Committee on Elections Preparations

TA2504102894 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 25 Apr 94 p A4

[Report by Yosi Torpstein]

[Text] The Palestinians have started preparing for elections to the Palestinian self-government council. A committee on general and municipal elections has recently started operating at Orient House, the Palestinian headquarters in East Jerusalem.

The committee, headed by Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, deputy head of the Palestinian delegation to the Washington negotiations, is working on the structure and powers of the council and on the manner in which the elections will be held. The committee members, some of whom are lawyers, represent the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The Palestinian Center for Statistics, set up several months ago in Jerusalem, has started drafting lists of Palestinian residents in the territories which will help in the preparation of voters lists.

The elections committee is about to send 30 Palestinian academics to Germany to study the issues of general and municipal elections. The studies, sponsored by the Germans, will include the management and conduct of elections, methods of defining constituencies, and so on. The course will start at the beginning of June and will last three weeks. At the end of the course, the academics will return and serve as instructors in local classes.

According to the Declaration of Principles [DOP] of 13 September 1993, general elections for the Palestinian self-government council are to be held in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank nine months after the DOP goes into effect and after the negotiations on the council and the elections are completed. According to the DOP timetable, the elections were supposed to be held in July but, due to the delay in the completion of the negotiations on the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho, the elections will probably be postponed.

Palestinian sources have reported that municipal elections may be held in the territories before the elections to the autonomy council take place.

Discusses Future Elections

JN2504175794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1530 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Telephone interview with Sa'ib 'Urayqat, head of the Palestinian elections committee, by Qol Yisra'el correspondent Sa'id Mu'addi, place and date not given; from the "With the Events" program—recorded]

[Text] [Mu'addi] Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, head of the Palestinian delegation to the Washington talks and head of the Elections and Local Government Committee, good evening.

['Urayqat] Good evening.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Sa'ib, preparations and arrangements are under way for the coming elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, including the appointment of an elections committee.

['Urayqat] In fact, the decision to hold elections was made on 20 November. This decision was the first presidential decree signed by President Yasir 'Arafat in the wake of the Oslo agreement. 'Arafat signed a second presidential decree appointing members in the committee. This committee comprises figures in the legal, administrative, city organizations, and statistical fields. It includes brothers such as lawyer Fu'ad Shihadah, 'Ali Safarini, Khalid al-Qidrah, Tawfiq Abu-Ghazal, Faraj al-Sarraf, Dr. Hasan Abu-Libdah, Dr. Muhammad Ishtayyah, Dr. Rami 'Abd-al-Hadi, Dr. Husayn al-A'raj, Zahirah Kamal, and Engineer Nadir al-Saqqa.

This committee was entrusted with preparing for domestic and general elections, with general elections meaning [self-rule] council according to the agreement. The committee is now working to lay the pillars of the basic elections law for the council, and also the basic Palestinian law for elections on the level of municipalities and village councils, which we call local government. God willing, in the next three days, and after we have completed both the studies and a total of 17 projects with the EEC, the basic contract will be signed between this committee and the EEC.

The committee's work also includes much training. We will send 30 persons to train in Germany. These people will return and train cadres here. According to our information, donations for training purposes will be given by other states such as Britain, Sweden, and Norway. I can say that because of the work of the past four months, both elections and democracy in the Palestinian community are now irreversible, and matters are proceeding persistently. God willing, we will manage to hold the elections as soon as possible.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Sa'ib, what are the bases and nature of the elections that will be held? When do you expect the coming elections will be held?

['Urayqat] As I said, elections will be held on the national level, that is, general political elections designed to elect the Palestinian Council. This is in addition to the elections on the domestic level for municipalities and village councils. As you know, there are 481 residential gatherings in the occupied territories, including only 29 municipalities, 82 village councils, and 23 camps. This leaves 347 residential gatherings without any bases for administration; in other words, they are run by what we call village heads. The committee is now in the process of returning the structural organization of the occupied territories in terms of the number of districts and governorates as well as upgrading a large number of villages to the level of municipalities and laying a basic Palestinian law for the local government elections. Meanwhile, we have finalized the options for the elections system, whether elections would be proportional or according to the majority or a mixed model in addition to dividing the constituencies. We will present this to the leadership in the next few days, so it can choose the elections system. Afterward, the legal team in this group will begin to put the complete touches on the elections system on the general national level. As we suggested in our negotiations in Washington, there will be an international supervising committee under UN auspices composed of the two cosponsors, the United States and Russia, the EC countries, the Scandinavian countries, Japan, Canada, Jordan, and Egypt. We seek to hold honest, free, and general elections. I believe that in view of the stalled negotiations, the date of 13 July, as stipulated in the agreement, cannot, from the technical and readiness viewpoints, be honored. Thus, we have worked out a new timetable for elections on 15 October.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, thank you very much.

['Urayqat] You are welcome.

Egypt

Mubarak Delivers Sinai Liberation Day Speech

NC2504100694 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0833 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Speech by President Husni Mubarak on the 12th anniversary of the liberation of Sinai; place not given—live or recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful.

Brother citizens: On this day in 1982, the great Egyptian people achieved what is regarded as one of the great historic events immortalized by time and thus etched forever in its annals, alive and forever in the people's conscience, and continue to spread their fruits and blessings everywhere until judgment day.

This date will always remain one of Egyptian nationalism and a symbol that embodies the people's ability to give endlessly and its determination to sacrifice all that is dear for the sake of our land and sovereignty and in defense of the homeland's supreme interests and its right to live in security and peace with other peoples and nations. This will continue to add to humanity's assets and contribute to the process of renaissance and progress.

This great achievement could not have come from a void nor have happened because of any historic coincidence. It was the logical and natural outcome of several antecedents and successive positive events that all came together to create this resounding victory and coordinated process that constituted a magnificent epic the like of which history rarely hands out.

The people understood the course it had to take and set out its supreme national interests with a clear scientific vision that did not confuse between reality and dreams or between the possible and the impossible. It then expressed the sincere intention to achieve these objectives in accordance with the right priorities and regardless of the sacrifices. The tumultuous masses competed in the national action process with full seriousness and commitment to the objective. Not one Egyptian who loved his country deviated from the noble national consensus.

With its unique sense of history and its shrewdness, the people realized that it had no life, present, or future without liberation of the land and honor and the retrieval of every single inch of the sacred land of a homeland blessed by Almighty God. It was incumbent on every Egyptian who cared deeply about his country and its honor to regard the objective of liberation as above all other considerations and to give it priority. No person, regardless of his status, can have dignity if his homeland does not hold its head high and has no dignity.

The people, who have a rich civilization, knew that the road to liberation was difficult and bitter and that it was not strewn with roses, rhetoric, or wishful thinking. The people knew that the road to liberation needed constant hard work, sweat, and tears in a solemn national procession in which wills were united, abilities merged, and differences eliminated. Thus it was certain that the march would continue to its triumphant goal.

The struggling people knew that liberation could not be achieved on one, but on several twisting paths in which decisive military action would mingle with active political action and where every citizen had a role to play, because the liberation battalions were not only confined to fighting soldiers, but included other builders of glory and civilization in every field. The real touchstone for testing a citizen's ability to participate is his readiness to make efforts and sacrifices within the framework of one national structure free from selfishness and personal interests at the expense of the interests of the public.

Since the first spark of the liberation war in those blessed hours of October 1973, the people realized the goal of the war. They realized that it was not an end in and of itself, but a means to achieve a fair and lasting peace based on the provisions of law and legitimacy and striking a balance between rights and various interests. Thus Egypt's noble people met the challenge of peace with the same resolve and determination with which they fought the glorious October war. They were not frightened by claims about the adversary's superiority and its great abilities and resources. They entertained no doubts about their ability to meet the challenge. It was inevitable that they would triumph and liberate their land and their will, the region would witness the birth of a new age in which broad horizons of peace would be opened, there would be coexistence, and violence and suffering, bloodshed, and the exhaustion of resources would end.

We place this great achievement, which the Egyptian people attained through war, peace, and self-confidence, at the service of peace and security for all the people of the region. We will use this achievement to serve the fateful pan-Arab issues, particularly the principle of total withdrawal in return for comprehensive peace, to guarantee balanced security for all the parties, and enhance cooperation based on acceptance and free choice. No one should be harmed and no one coerced into anything. There should be fruitful cooperation for the common good.

We are following with great attention and anticipation the ongoing talks on the various tracks. We are confident that the people's will will prevail and triumph. We are also confident that the differences that surface occasionally are temporary, not an obstacle to the march of history. All the parties realize that there is no alternative to a comprehensive and just peace. No one can stop the current for change or tie the region up in the shackles of subversion and stalemate. The world is witnessing exhilarating developments and an unprecedented, great technical revolution.

All our achievements and all the horizons that peace will open up for other peoples with whom we share a common interest and fate inspire us to double national work at home with firm resolve and renewable energy, spreading glory, cultivating hope, making progress, and opening great vistas for innovative and creative work for every Egyptian.

The current comprehensive reconstruction and development in the blessed land of Sinai is a good example and a true mirror of the future throughout Egypt. It is a future full of dreams and hopes, replete with good fortune and bounty for every hand that lays a stone in the great building of renaissance, for every arm that safeguards the homeland, and for every eye that guards the country and the people's security.

May God grant success to us all. May He protect our march. He is the best protector. May God's peace and mercy be with you.

Islamic Group's Military Wing Leader Killed

NC2504141494 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1355 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 25 Apr (MENA)—Terrorist Tal'at Yasin Hammam, leader of the military wing of the so-called Islamic Group [IG], was killed in his hideout in Hada'iq al-Qubbah, Cairo, at dawn today during a shootout with the State Security detectives, who had to shoot back at him.

His death is considered as one of the successful strikes at local terrorist leaders and their failing attempts to shake Egyptian security and stability.

Called 'Major Link' in Financing

NC2504175594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1720 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Excerpts] Cairo, 25 Apr (MENA)—An official source in the Ministry of Interior has stated that terrorist Tal'at Muhammad Yasin Hammam, who was killed today, is considered the primary leader who controlled the "Afghanistan Returnees" organization and its military wing. He was sentenced to death in Case No. 24/1993 on military felony.

In a statement this evening, the source revealed that Hammam was the primary source of instructions to implement terrorist operations in the country and the supreme commander at the domestic level. He was also the major link between the inside and outside, since he was the primary source of financing for terrorist schemes.

The source pointed out that Hammam received funds directly from financing elements abroad and redistributed them among the groups in charge of carrying out the operations in accordance with a plan prepared in advance.

In his statement, the security source revealed that a search of the terrorist's home yielded large amounts of local and foreign currencies, long distance telephone cards, and official documents ready for use in the various terrorist operations.

The search also yielded some important documents on how to make explosive and incendiary charges, including those used in the assassination of Major General Ra'uf Khayrat, deputy chief of the State Security Investigation in charge of religious activity, in addition to charts of his residence in the Pyramids area, the route he took, and the location selected for carrying out the assassination.

A detailed list of the names and addresses of some banks and companies targeted in previous operations and in the future was also found in the terrorist's home.

The security source said in his statement that papers containing detailed information about political, executive, security, judicial, and media figures and detailed drawings of their places of residence and the routes they traveled were also discovered.

The State Security forces that stormed the place found a German- made pistol with a loaded magazine, a facsimile machine with a collection of messages faxed previously, and a detailed list of the names and addresses of foreign news agencies and newspapers, of their correspondents, and of some local newspapers.

The security source pointed out that the killed terrorist's movements confirmed that he was in charge of issuing statements on behalf of terrorist organizations and sending them to several news agencies abroad.

He added that the State Security forces also found a collection of very important organizational papers, in addition to ciphering terms and detailed information on some of the companies that produce and export movie features and soap operas. [passage omitted]

The source noted that the State Security Investigation forces, assisted by the central security forces, have launched synchronized search operations in 12 governorates, during which 58 active terrorist elements that took part in recent operations were caught. They are being interrogated, he said.

The source added that the State Security service is monitoring all the elements on which information indicating involvement in terrorist operations have been obtained.

Interior Ministry Spokesman Comments

NC2504212594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1940 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 25 Apr (MENA)—The official Interior Ministry spokesman has stated that all the terrorist elements inside or outside the country are under security control.

Commenting on the killing of terrorist leader Tal'at Yasin Hammam, the official spokesman this evening said that the successive blows by security are now being directed at the heads and leaders of the terrorist groups in Egypt and are no longer confined to pursuing those who carry out these operations.

He affirmed that the State Security Investigations Apparatus has drawn up a detailed and precise map of all the organizations engaged in terrorism, explaining that this map contains the names of all those involved in these operations and their roles, in terms of financing, monitoring, preparation, and execution.

The official spokesman added that this map is constantly being updated, removing the names of terrorists who are captured or killed during confrontations with the security forces.

The spokesman emphasized that the main lines of finance from abroad are being monitored and efforts are under way to pursue and arrest all those involved.

He explained that the security forces were able to frustrate most terrorist operations before they were carried out and were able to capture all those involved and seize all materials used in these operations. He noted the huge quantity of materials that have been seized recently. He said that the perpetrators of every single recent operation have been identified, and a large number of perpetrators of these operations have been captured. The security forces are currently pursuing the fugitives to bring them to justice.

The official Interior Ministry spokesman affirmed that the Egyptian security service is monitoring all the elements abroad that instigate these operations and their movements in various countries of the world. He explained that the security service with its various branches is currently preparing the necessary plans to deal with these elements decisively and effectively.

Four 'Terrorists' Killed in Asyut

NC2504142694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1340 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Asyut, Upper Egypt, 25 Apr (MENA)—Four terrorists were killed today in a clash with the security forces in the al-Walidiyah cemetery in Asyut Governorate. The four were involved in the assassination of Asyut Security Chief Brigadier General Shirin 'Ali Fahmi and his guard last Wednesday.

The security forces were watching the terrorists' hideout, to which they were directed by terrorist Hasan Khalifah, who was arrested after the assassination. When the security forces stormed the hideout, they were fired upon. They had to return fire, killing the four terrorists. Four weapons—including an automatic rifle, a policeman's pistol, and a large amount of ammunition—were found with the dead terrorists.

The terrorists are Ahmad Anwar Fahmi, 22, a student at the faculty of commerce who comes from Mallawi, al-Minya; Amin Shafiq Ahmad, 23, a student at the pharmaceutical college who comes from Suhaj; Usamah 'Abd-al-'Al Muhammad 'Uthman, 21, a student at the faculty of law who comes from Tahta in Suhaj; and Muhammad Mutawalli 'Atiyah, a student at the Higher Institute of Agricultural Extension and Cooperation who comes from Juhaynah in Suhaj.

The prosecution has been asked to launch an investigation under the supervision of Counselor 'Izzat Mus'ad, attorney general in southern Asyut prosecution.

Report Warns of Islamic Group's Expansion to al-Minya

NC2404120094

[Editorial Report] Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic on 18 April on pages 62 to 64 publishes a 1,200-word report by 'Isam 'Abd-al-Jawad in which he warns that al-Minya Governorate "might turn into another Asyut."

The report reveals that in their search for "additional and urgent funding for their terrorist operations, terrorist groups have decided to engage in the antiquities trade," having obtained a religious edict [fatwa] from their leadership legalizing this trade.

To establish themselves in the community, these groups have started to offer free health and education services. They have opened health centers where the groups' physicians examine patients without charge and women gynecologists wage a fierce war on family planning. They also offer free private lessons in mosques and sell foodstuffs at reduced prices in dozens of shops, mostly unlicensed, the report explains.

To finance their social activities, the groups collect voluntary as well as obligatory donations from shops and houses, 'Abd-al-Jawad says.

He points out that the extremist groups' activities cover all the cities in al-Minya Governorate. He notes, however, that Mallawi is the main center of their activity. "The Islamic Group organization controls the city of Mallawi. The Muslim Brotherhood presence has thinned out in the city for fear of a clash with the Islamic Group," the writer says.

"Al-Shaykh 'Isa Mosque, the main stronghold of the Islamic Group in Mallawi, is the site of a weekly meeting on Wednesdays. Group members dressed in their Pakistani uniforms tour the city in groups, chanting Islamic songs, until they reach the crowded mosque." The mosque's orator is changed every week and his name is rarely announced. Following the sermon, a young man reads "the weekly bulletin on conditions of Muslims in the world, which reports on Westerners' persecution of Muslims, the internal position of the group and its persecution by the authorities, and finally the success of its operations." The bulletin concludes with warnings and threats to whoever stands in the group's way.

Explaining why Mallawi was selected, 'Abd-al-Jawad says that it is one of the main strongholds of the Islamic Group and the birthplace of al-Sadat's assassin, Khalid al-Islambuli, and Muhammad Shawqi al-Islambuli, one of the Islamic group leaders who escaped to and operated from Afghanistan.

'Abd-al-Jawad adds that signs indicate that a number of the fugitive leaders of the Dayrut branch of the Islamic Group reside in Mallawi and work out plans for their operations there. Of these he mentions Rif'at Zaydan and Jamal 'Abd-al-Hamid 'Abd-al-Nasir, better known as al-Shaykh.

Citing a politician who requested anonymity "out of fear for his political career," 'Abd-al-Jawad says that terrorist groups control much of the services; they attract the citizens by offering free medical treatment and private lessons. Although the Awqaf Ministry appoints preachers and imams every now and then, the groups still control the governorate's mosques and the ministry's imams fear punishment from the terrorist groups.

Asked why the extremism phenomenon spreads in al-Minya, the politician cites unemployment as the major reason. He notes that the rate exceeds 60 percent and that productive projects are almost nonexistent. Terrorist groups attract citizens by involving frustrated young people in small projects, he explains.

As to where collected funds go, the report notes that they are spent on arms and financing operations in Asyut.

Rifts Within 'Extremist' Groups in Jail Noted

NC2204124994 Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 15 Apr 94 p 23

[Report by Hamdi Rizq]

[Text] AL-MUSAWWAR has learned that the Prisons Department last week moved 50 extremists led by Hasan al-Hillawi, who declared their breakaway from the al-Jihad Organization, from the al-Istiqbal Prison to the Mazra'at Turrah Jail after repeated clashes with the old al-Jihad members led by 'Abbud al-Zumur and Ayman al-Zawahiri inside the al-Istiqbal Prison and because the security agencies fear killings inside the prison in light of threats between the two groups. This measure was taken after the extremists in Ward A and Ward B in al-Istiqbal rejected the entry into their wards of members belonging to Hasan al-Hillawi.

A joint statement released inside the prison by the leaderships of the al-Jihad Organization and the Islamic Group accused al-Hillawi of supporting the security agencies, deviating from the consensus, and of being traitors and spies. They sanctioned their murder. They took this measure to prevent other members from joining al-Hillawi, who declared his rejection of acts of violence prevailing among the extremist groups.

Al-Hillawi used the hospital in the al-Istiqbal Prison as a shelter for himself and his 50-member group and sought a dialogue with the leaders of the Islamic Group, particularly Najih Ibrahim. The latter, however, rejected al-Hillawi and accused him of being a traitor and spy. Heated arguments took place between al-Hillawi and members of the al-Jihad Organization and they were about to engage in fistfights and hand-to-hand fighting. But policemen intervened, disengaged the two groups, and decided to move the al-Hillawi followers to the Mazra'at Turrah Prison.

The recent crisis, the second disturbance in the al-Jihad Organization after the Muhammad al-Makkawi dissension from al-Zawahiri, who is living abroad, began when a fax reached Arab and foreign newspapers signed by Hasan al-Hillawi. Al-Hillawi is a prominent figure in the al-Jihad Organization and participated in military sedition in 1977. The fax urged the extremist groups to exercise self-restraint, stop acts of violence, lay down their arms, and hold a dialogue with the government to ease restrictions on detainees. He expressed readiness to hold this dialogue and declared that it is inadmissible to oppose the ruler and form groups opposed to the regime. Although the fax caused confusion among al-Jihad Organization ranks abroad and raised questions about al-Hillawi's role in the al-Istiqbal Prison, a lawyer on the detainees' defense panel asked to meet al-Hillawi on instructions from abroad to discuss his call and make sure that he appeared, particularly as he is considered to be an important intellectual leader in the al-Jihad Organization. The lawyer met al-Hillawi and asked him what he wanted. Al-Hillawi answered: I urge the groups to give up acts of violence and I will undertake a dialogue with the government. At the meeting, which was also attended by Ahmad Rashid Muhammad Rashid, one of the most important figures in the Vanguards of Conquest, the lawyer accused al-Hillawi of trying to get out of jail by any means, that he was weakening, and that he no longer put up any resistance. The lawyer advised the group members abroad on the details of the meeting. Despite the threats that the al-Jihad members inside the prison made to al-Hillawi to return to the fold, he rejected them and gained the support of 50 extremists. He thus established an independent organization and began making calls denouncing violence and calling for dialogue. The groups inside the prison considered these calls to be a deviation from the course by a leading intellectual figure who played a major role in the military sedition and the reorganization of the al-Jihad Organization (Case No. 401 of 1977). They feared that his influence might spread to the rest of the groups and create problems with other members. Bloody clashes would have occurred had the prison administration not intervened, saving al-Hillawi and his group from certain death by moving them to the Mazra'at Turrah Prison.

Disputes continue, involving the leaderships of the extremists abroad and Ayman al-Zawahiri, al-Jihad leader abroad, and Muhammad al-Makkawi, who is accused in State Security Case No. 401, known as the reorganization of the al-Jihad Organization. Attempts by members of the group in Egypt, particularly lawyers, failed to resolve the dispute despite reports that al-Zawahiri traveled to Europe and that al-Makkawi left Pakistan and joined tribes on the border fearing manhunts by the Pakistani authorities of Arabs there.

PLO's 'Abbas Departs; 'Arafat To Meet Christopher

NC2604114594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1110 GMT 26 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 26 Apr (MENA)—PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas, alias Abu-Mazin, left Cairo for Tunis at noon today at the end of a two-day [as received] visit to Egypt.

Palestinian Ambassador in Cairo Zuhdi al-Qidrah, who saw Abu-Mazin off, said that during his visit to Cairo the Palestinian official was informed of the progress in the Palestinian-Israeli talks. He also met members of the Palestinian delegation to the negotiations and gave guidance regarding some issues on the negotiating table.

Al-Qidrah said Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat would arrive in Cairo in the next few hours to meet President Muhammad Husni Mubarak and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher during his visit to Egypt tomorrow. The talks will deal with developments in the peace process.

League Denies Iraqi Minister Detained at Airport

NC2504160394 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1530 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 25 Apr (MENA)—An official source in the Arab League today denied a report by a weekly opposition paper that the State Security Detectives Service at Cairo International Airport detained Iraqi Justice Minister Shabib Lazim al-Maliki, who arrived in Cairo yesterday to attend the meetings of the Arab Justice Ministers Executive Bureau in the league secretariat.

The source said that the Iraqi minister was received at the airport by the Arab League assistant secretary general.

In a statement today, the source said that the assistant secretary general for legal affairs and Iraq's permanent delegate to the Arab League received the Iraqi minister in the VIP lounge and that they all left the airport without any problems shortly after the minister's arrival.

U.S. Aircraft Deal With Israel Criticized

NC2204113594 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 13 Apr 94 p 14

["Dividing Lines" column by Samir Rajab]

[Text] It does not befit the United States to sell 25 F-15A military aircraft to Israel in the current tense atmosphere and when acts of violence are taking place daily. With this decision, Washington wants to tell the whole world: "Let Israel strike at the Palestinians as it pleases, let it slow down and stall over implementing the Gaza-Jericho Agreement, and let it set the toughest conditions for withdrawal from the Syrian Golan; that is, if it ever really considered withdrawal." These are not our words. This is, verbatim, what the Pentagon said to justify the aircraft deal: The Pentagon's statement said that the deal will contribute to furthering the foreign policy and national security of a "friendly" country that will remain an important force for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East.

First, the claim that Israel is a factor of stability contradicts the truth, because since they "planted it," Israel has been the root of upheaval, conflict, and war. Even after signs of peace began to loom on the horizon, Israel did not give up its shameless actions and behavior. Proof of this is the al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre and subsequent shameless acts.

At the same time, I maintain that the United States has a right to market its industrial products and help its partners survive. Frankly speaking, however, the timing is inappropriate. The need is not so urgent that Israel should be provided with the most modern offensive aircraft on the pretext of strengthening its air force so that it can reach particular positions in Iraq, which fired missiles at Israeli cities during the Gulf war. This, of course, is a flimsy excuse for the simple reason that the United States is the first to know Iraq's current military and economic capabilities, which do not enable it to stage even a limited maneuver, let alone launch a raid on Israel.

Anyway, America continues to reiterate that it is a "partner" in the peace negotiations. A partner is supposed to be concerned about attaining the goal. But I believe that the announcement today about a deal for the sale of $2.4-billion-worth of aircraft to one of the parties in the partnership, a party noted for its intransigence, arbitrariness, and conceit, will not make the achievement of the "goal" of peace, which we have long and eagerly awaited, easy.

U.S. Administration's Foreign Policy Assailed

NC2304102694 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 14 Apr 94 p 5

[Editorial: "Strange Statements and Stranger Attitudes by the United States"]

[Text] U.S. sources have pointed out that Israel's acquisition of 45 fighter aircraft of the latest version will enable the Israeli air force to hit sites in Libya, Iraq, and Iran, thanks to the aircraft's capability for long-distance flights. This is the first time the U.S. Government has approved the sale of aircraft of this advanced type to another state, as it had been used exclusively by the U.S. Air Force.

It is strange for U.S. sources to single out these three states, two Arab states and an Islamic state, regardless of the kind of policy adopted by the latter. In addition, the position of U.S. President Bill Clinton's government on the question of the international inspection of sites said to be used by North Korea to produce nuclear weapons and its threats to conduct air strikes against South Korea should it reject international inspection of its nuclear facilities are surprising to many. They also bring into question the real reason prompting the current U.S. Administration and the preceding administrations to ignore any mention of the nuclear weapons that Israel managed to produce and store in the Negev desert a long time ago and to turn a blind eye to the Tel Aviv government's continued refusal to sign the nuclear nonproliferation treaty. This refusal is a flagrant defiance of the world community and the treaties endorsed by the majority of countries.

Washington cannot claim to be ignorant of Israel's nuclear activity, something that is known to all scientific intelligence services, which know the number of nuclear bombs produced by the Dimona reactor and other hidden facilities. Moreover, every now and then the Israeli intelligence services leak information about the nuclear weapons that Israel possesses, the purpose of which is clear: to spread panic and anxiety among the neighboring and non-neighboring Arab states. If we add to this Washington's vacillating position over the tragedy in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which encourages the Serbian leaders to continue their barbaric aggression and ethnic cleansing operations against Muslims there, we will realize the real feelings governing the attitude of the U.S. Administration, no matter how much it tries to pretend goodwill, with which Washington officials' statements are replete!

Editorial Urges End of Embargoes in Iraq, Libya

NC2304093694 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 13 Apr 94 pp 1, 4

[Editorial: "The Arabs Are Under Siege"]

[Text] The "international" Security Council has once again decided to maintain the sanctions on the Libyan people which, it falsely claims, are imposed on the Libyan regime for its refusal to extradite two of its citizens accused of involvement in blowing up an American airliner over Scotland in 1988.

This decision means continuing the siege of Libya, both people and state, for another four months, during which Libyan citizens will be paying the price for a crime they have not committed. Libya's children, including babies, will shoulder the burden of punishment for a crime on which no sentence has yet been issued.

At the same time, the siege of Iraq continues. It is the siege of the people and state and not the siege of Saddam Husayn alone or his regime. The long-range monitoring is continuing and its purpose is to prevent the Iraqi people from benefiting from their resources and wealth.

It is regrettable that international resolutions are issued one after the other against Libya and Iraq amid Arab silence at the best of times and even with an Arab welcome and blessing. While this silence by any other Arab country can be excused, we cannot excuse the silence of Egypt, the citadel of Arabism, the pillar of the Arab movement, and the country that represents the fundamental basis of every correct Arab policy. Also, lifting the siege from Libya and Iraq serves—in the present circumstances—a purely Egyptian interest. It is enough to mention that there are thousands of Egyptians working in these two fraternal countries and both countries can absorb more when the situation stabilizes and improves.

We do not deny that there is Egyptian action toward lifting the siege. But we believe that, in view of its role, Egypt can act more strongly in this direction. The Arab League secretary general can also support and back this action. Conditions are possibly appropriate today for the Arab League head to call for an Arab summit, not to affect a reconciliation, to "kiss and make up," or to "forget the past," but to stop the deterioration in Arab relations, to save the fraternal peoples in Libya and Iraq, and to draw up a plan for lifting the siege imposed on them.

At the same time, all the Egyptian forces, parties, and establishments, both the ruling and opposition ones, can today start an Arab campaign to save the Iraqi and Libyan peoples. The quicker this action is, the better it will be; otherwise, we will all pay the price in the form of more differences, divisions, and weakness in this era of the siege of the Arabs.

U.S. 'Double Standards' for Iraq, Bosnia Denounced

NC2404114494 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 17 Apr 94 p 8

["Closeup" column by Salamah Ahmad Salamah: "Outside International Legitimacy"]

[Text] The U.S. F-15 military aircraft's downing of two UN helicopters over the no-fly zone in north Iraq is raising many questions about the legality of the measures the United States is taking in monitoring the situation there and the congruity with the UN resolutions that specified the nature of the international measures imposed on Iraq as a result of its aggression against Kuwait.

It is well known that a Western agreement imposing the no-fly zone over Iraq was reached among the United States, Britain, and France outside the framework of the United Nations and the Security Council resolutions to protect the Kurds in north Iraq from the atrocities and persecution of Saddam Husayn's regime. Despite the fact that the Shiites in south Iraq are exposed to the same atrocities and persecution, they have not enjoyed the same degree of protection as the Kurds.

It seems illogical that the West should volunteer to protect the Kurds in Iraq while it ignores the raging battles between the Turkish Army and the Kurds in the Turkish-Iraqi border area. The Turkish forces have for several months been bombarding and burning Kurdish villages on a large scale, and even chasing them inside Iraqi territory. This indicates that the no-fly zone in north Iraq and the U.S. military aircraft sorties in its airspace are not meant to protect the Kurds as much as to put the Iraqi people under a stiffer international blockade than the Security Council resolutions stipulate in a way that threatens to separate the Kurdish areas in the north from the Iraqi state. This would definitely lead to partition or to creating new political situation allowing the establishment of an independent state for the Kurds.

The U.S. State Department spokesman's statement blaming Iraq for causing the downing of the two helicopters and the death of more than 20 senior commanders and UN figures is ridiculous. It is the U.S. military aircraft that mistook the UN helicopters. When the use of double standards becomes a well-established method in international dealings, the stance of the United States and NATO on the Serb aggression against Bosnia and the continuing bombardment of Gorazde and of the UN forces seem extremely strange. The Serb forces' defiance of the UN resolutions and NATO ultimatums are being met with a great deal of patience, pampering, and caution. Air strikes are calculated while contacts, negotiations, and attempts to reach a peaceful solution go on. Moreover, numerous acts of aggression against safe zones in Bosnia are ignored. This totally contradicts what is happening in Iraq. Why? This is the question.

Communications Ministers Arrive for Conference

Russia's Vladimir Bulgak

NC2404145194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1410 GMT 24 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 24 Apr (MENA)—Russian Minister of Communications Vladimir Bulgak arrived in Cairo this afternoon. During his visit, the Russian minister will attend the "Africa for 1994 Communications" exhibition and seminar due to begin after 26 April.

Israel's Shulamit Aloni

NC2404194594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1912 GMT 24 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 24 Apr (MENA)—Shulamit Aloni, Israeli minister of communications, science, and arts, arrived in Cairo this evening. She will participate in the five-day African Communications Conference due to open tomorrow.

Iran's Sayyed Mohammad Gharazi

NC2504062194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1520 GMT 24 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 24 Apr (MENA)—Sayyed Mohammad Gharazi, Iranian minister of post, telegraph, and telephone, arrived in Cairo at noon today for a visit of several days to Egypt. He will participate in the 1994 Africa Communications Exhibition organized by the International Telecommunication Union, which is due to open in Cairo the day after tomorrow.

Morocco

'Source:' Algerian Envoy's Remarks on Sahara 'Deluding'

LD2504134994 Rabat MAP in English 1228 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Rabat, Apr. 25 (MAP)—Morocco is amazed at the "vigorous and deluding" statements of Algerian ambassador to Spain this April 21 during an international conference to support the peace plan in the Sahara, a Moroccan official source said.

The Algerian diplomat's address unveils a total ignorance of the stances of each side and of the evolution of the UN secretary general's efforts, the source said adding the address was all the more amazing as the Algerian Government has repeatedly claimed it was observing "restraint" regarding the Sahara issue. The Algerian ambassador's statement was all but conform to the pledge to restraint [as received], a fact that leads us to wonder whether the statement reflects the official position of Algeria or only a personal opinion, said the source.

The Algerian ambassador had stated that the present deadlock in the Sahara issue was due to "hesitations of one of the two sides ... while the Polisario [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro] has always showed a high spirit of maturity."

On which basis does the Algerian ambassador make such allegations, the Moroccan official source wonders adding that seemingly the Algerian diplomat had not even consulted germane resolutions of the Security Council and particularly resolution 907 which gives the secretary general until next June 30 to have the Polisario adhere to the compromise on interpretation and implementation of eligibility criteria.

If the Algerian ambassador had consulted the latest report of the secretary general, he would have learnt that Morocco has accepted a year ago the compromise and consequently the one responsible for the deadlock is the Polisario.

The Moroccan Government would have wished that participants in the conference examine the situation in Bosnia where hundreds of innocent victims are killed every day while others are living in inhumane and deplorable conditions, the same source said.

Kuwait

Daily Supports Iran's Call For Joint Maneuvers With Gulf

JN2504170294 Kuwait AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM in Arabic 21 Apr 94 p 1

[Editorial: "The Gulf's Security is the Responsibility of its Sons"]

[Text] There is no doubt that military exercises enable armies to gain large-scale field skills and high combat experience, which would not have been gained without hard training, direct close contact, and continuous examination of the latest military technologies and science. This is what was done by some armies in the Gulf, including the Kuwaiti Army, following the end of the liberation war. They held land, naval, and air maneuvers with the Western alliance states—the United States, Britain, and France—as well as naval maneuvers with Russia, which is also among the advanced states militarily and is a signatory to the military cooperation agreement with Kuwait. There is no doubt that the aim of these maneuvers goes beyond training and military doctrines to political and economic interests. It is not wrong to embark on such cooperation, particularly when the parties involved recognize mutual interests based on equality and respect for national sovereignty. However, despite their importance, these maneuvers are not an alternative to the Arab defense order, of which the Gulf is an integral part, and will not prevent efforts to build a regional security order that is badly needed in the region. Otherwise, the maneuvers will become a shackle and a monopoly that will lead to subservience.

Hence, the Islamic Republic of Iran's call several days ago for holding joint maneuvers with Gulf states is important and will reinforce military cooperation and deepen the sense of joint responsibility toward the region's security, on which the Gulf states' political literature always focuses and proposes as one of the Gulf desires and as a priority for the region's states to reinforce their defense structure. It is, however, noticed that this call has not been favorably received, even though it may provide an opportunity for us in Kuwait to introduce a new strategic dimension in the security cooperation and military coordination—a dimension that is justified in light of the unity of the security interests, the deep historical, and religious ties, and the economic and trade links in the past and at present. Iran's firm position on the Iraqi regime's invasion of the State of Kuwait, as well as the blood we shared in confronting that tyrannical regime, makes it necessary for us to establish all forms of cooperation and coordination between Kuwait and Iran in particular and between the Gulf states and Iran in general. This will breathe life into Gulf-Iranian relations and will remove some obstacles hampering strategic understanding to protect the Gulf from all dangers and ambitions and rise to the level of the big challenges threatening the Gulf region.

Saudi Arabia

King Comments on Islamic Faith, Bilateral Ties

PM2504204194 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 24 Apr94 p 4

[Unattributed report: "We Will Not Tolerate Mistakes That Affect Our Faith. Kingdom's Relations With Islamic World Are Excellent"]

[Text] Jeddah, AL-HAYAH—The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz has stressed that his government is not prepared to tolerate mistakes related to the Islamic faith and that it has no intention of harming any Saudi individual through his wealth. He spoke of the "strength of Saudi relations with the Islamic states." He said: "We are the friends of all within our capabilities and within mutual interests."

In a comprehensive statement to the media on 22 April during his inspection tour of the central station of the prophet's holy mosque services in holy Medina, King Fahd said: "In the midst of the bliss we are enjoying we should expect that someone would come and try to spoil it, but nobody would be able to do that because the people and all their institutions are unanimous in preventing and deterring these things."

He emphasized that divine will, not human capability, was behind the completion of his project for the expansion of the prophet's holy mosque. He said: "Some people said that the project would require 20 or 30 years to complete." He added that he had made the decision and assumed the responsibility, and the project was completed. He noted that "since the beginning of work on the project, God's boons and favors have increased for us." He said that oil production and prices have increased.

In his statement King Fahd said that "God has blessed this country. It has had no colonialism and no interference in its affairs. It is fortunate that the people of this country always, in private and in public, raise their hands to the creator of the universe adhering to their true Islamic faith that is free from blemishes, everyone doing his duty as dictated by God. This a divine bliss and we should thank God for it day and night, in good and in bad times, at all times."

He added: "We have had innumerable boons. There is no better testimony than the facts. The facts speak for themselves. Thank God, our relations with the Islamic world are excellent. Our relations with the states with which we have relations are also excellent. We have no bad relations with anyone at all and we owe nobody any favors, except the almighty God. That is why we should be grateful to the gracious almighty God."

The custodian of the two holy mosques added: "Yes, we are Muslims, thank God, and we adhere to our Islamic faith in letter and spirit, but some things are not related to that." He added: "We have human resources in our country today. If we look at the students and experts of theology in this country, and those entrusted with the affairs of Muslims for the purpose of pronouncing Islamic edicts [ifta']...we would find very excellent resources and raw material."

King Fahd added: "There can be no doubt that the theological resources which educate the citizens, the judges, and the Shari'ah courts—the state has nothing to do with and does not interfere in any of these things.... We do not want anything from anyone. We only want to be friends with everyone. We do not want to interfere in problems in any way, not international problems, not Arab problems, not African problems, and not Asian problems. We want to be friends within the limits of our Islamic faith. We cannot, under any circumstance, swallow or accept anything that runs contrary to the Islamic faith. Nobody except God can impose his will on anyone. I say this because it is a fact. It is a fact about this country dating back to the fathers and forefathers."

He added: "The imams of Islam have long recorded, analyzed, and explained this fact. The Koran and the prophet's teachings are the constitution of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. I do not believe that anyone can claim otherwise. We are everyone's friends within the boundaries of our capabilities and mutual interests. We want nothing but friendship and respect from any country in the world. As regards what has taken place in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the form of construction and doing one's duty, be it the citizen or the state, the projects speak for themselves. We are perhaps the least pretentious and do not try to project matters in the media or in a propagandist way, but (projects) speak for themselves in a country which 20 or 30 years ago had no resources. I say that because I was there and I know this very well."

He added: "Where else do resources come from, if not from God. We have the oil. When oil was discovered the war broke out and stopped everything. I can say that since 1953, or perhaps 1955, the oil began yielding an output, not the required output but as the years went by that output began to enable the state to launch projects."

He contined: "I was very happy that God enabled me to make these extensions in the Mecca mosque, and in the squares and buildings, and to make the roof improvements, and the same applies to what we now see in Medina. That will not stop at any limit. We will continue the good work in the interest of Islam and the Muslims."

He said: "The best social system, as they say, is the Islamic system. It is unmatched. It has gentleness and kindness and it has God's words." He added: "We have a wealth of theologians who have performed their duties in the best required way, be it in the Shari'ah courts, as imams in the holy mosque, in the holy Medina, or anywhere else in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia."

He continued: "Naturally, amid all these boons and graces we are enjoying, we should expect that some would try to undermine them but, by God, they would not be able to do so because all the people and their institutions are unanimous in their resolve to prevent or deter these things by legitimate means. We want nothing from anyone. All we want is for the almighty God to bless us and forgive the mistakes we unintentionally commit. I beseech God to show us the way and to guide us to what would be to his satisfaction. These projects we see now, whether in Medina, Mecca, or anywhere else in the country, have penetrated mountains as roads and reached the mountain peaks in 'Asir, and have reached the sea. Some are open roads, others pass through mountains. Roads have been built from north to south and east to west. And I do not say that that is all we want to do."

In conclusion, King Fahd said: All this is a result of adherence to the letter and spirit of the Islamic faith. As regards mistakes, they have been mentioned in the Koran and in the teachings of the prophet, may God's prayers and blessings be upon him, and the Orthodox Caliphs. The correct path would not have been known if there were no mistakes, but mistakes do not last and the state will absolutely not tolerate mistakes related to the faith. That will not be tolerated. There is no desire to upset anyone or harm him through what he owns. The state has never harmed anyone through his wealth. On the contrary, we bless everyone and wish them well. We have now seen projects which began some years ago and have now reached their peak.... They provide the evidence that God has enabled us and ordered us to do that work. If I am to be credited for that work, I am not alone in that." [closing quotation mark as published]. He added: "I am only completing a mission. I hope God will help me in any work I undertake in this country in the interest of the public provided it does not violate the Islamic faith in any way. We want nothing but good for everyone, but we will absolutely not let anyone come and change our faith or our organization of our Islamic faith because it is all good and it is all bliss. We see now that our relations with the world are at their best possible because we do not interfere in anyone's affairs and do not want anyone to interfere in our affairs."

Police Arrest 5 Human Rights Activists in Ha'il

NC2504110794 Paris AFP in English 1001 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Nicosia, April 25 (AFP)—Saudi police arrested five political rights activists in the northern town of Ha'il at the weekend, a London-based Saudi human rights group said Monday [25 April].

The Committee for the Defence of Legitimate Rights said the five teachers and Muslim clerics supported its calls for political reforms in the kingdom, which has no parties and is governed according to Islamic principles.

A statement from the committee sent to AFP said police also arrested the son of Muhammad al-Massari, one of the group's founders, on Saturday.

Anwar Muhammad al-Massari, 19, was arrested "to put pressure on his father," who left Saudi Arabia to relaunch the committee in London, the committee said.

His father, a physics professor at Riyadh University, was arrested in May 1993 with a group of other Saudi intellectuals only days after the group was set up.

He was held for five months without charge, said the group, which is banned in Saudi Arabia and is pressing for freedom of speech and association.

On Saturday, Arab diplomats in Riyadh said Gulf Arab states had reservations about a US document calling on them to encourage pluralism and democracy as the basis of future relations in the Middle East.

The document, presented to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in February, said Washington wanted to see participants in the multilateral Middle East peace talks "encourage individual and collective freedoms and pursue democracy and pluralism."

Foreign Ministry officials from GCC members Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman met in Riyadh on Saturday to discuss the document.

Of the six GCC states, only Kuwait has a freely elected parliament with various political groups represented. The other five have specially-appointed consultative assemblies.

US Secretary of State Warren Christopher is to visit Riyadh as part of a Middle East tour starting Tuesday [26 April].

Yemen

Planning, Development Minister Comments on Recent Events

NC2504210094 Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 22 Apr 94 pp 30-31

[Interview with Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani, planning and development minister, leader of the General People's Congress, and former north Yemeni prime minister and foreign minister, by Majdi al-Daqqaq in Cairo "a few days ago"]

[Text] [Al-Daqqaq] It appears that the situation in Yemen now has exceeded all expectations and the crisis has produced a new situation. How do you see it?

[Al-Iryani] Yes. A crisis of this kind can only bring something new. Let me say first that the Pledge and Accord Document did not introduce new ideas regarding the principles of the state structure. Much of what was contained in it was derived from the proposed constitutional amendments that were agreed upon between the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] and the General People's Congress [GPC] and then among the government coalition parties. The amendments we agreed upon, particularly regarding local government, went further than what we had agreed upon in the Pledge and Accord Document. The concerns that the parties had regarding laying the foundations for the single Yemeni state were considered during the interim period. Therefore, they were not the result of the crisis itself.

The purpose of initiating the crisis was not to achieve what was contained in the document, because it was clear that the Pledge and Accord Document does not mean the end for the YSP. It had other designs, particularly regarding the issue of the single Yemeni state.

During the dialogue, the federalism balloon was released, and the party began exercising the powers of a separate government in what was known as the south. It became clear that federalism meant clearly the federalism of the (former) north and south.

It is certain that the YSP was not thinking about anything that applies to the new unified Yemen. Its views were based on the old division. Therefore, the Pledge and Accord Document did not fulfill the purpose of the party. As far as it was concerned, the document was not the end. Had the party viewed it as its ultimate objective, it would have ended the crisis. Therefore, I think that the party wants to impose its way of managing this crisis on the Yemeni people in order to achieve a result satisfactory to the party first and foremost.

[Al-Daqqaq] Is the focus of the discussion now the return of the army to the positions that it held before 22 May 1990?

[Al-Iryani] Yes. What we are actually seeing is an attempt for a total split.

[Al-Daqqaq] Therefore, are we about to witness an imminent extensive clash?

[Al-Iryani] The brothers in the YSP have clearly declared that they will not submit to the numerical majority, and constitutional legitimacy is based on the numerical majority. That was the rocket with which they destroyed all the legislative and executive institutions on the pretext that the party will not accept submission to majority rule. In that case, there was nothing we could do but to treat the party as a rebellious group that does not accept constitutional rules. This, of course, would lead to conflict. The YPC's strategy has always been to avoid involving the Yemenis in fighting.

We have assumed, rightly or wrongly, that the imposition of constitutional legitimacy is bound to involve the use of force. Therefore, we waived the right to impose constitutional legitimacy in order not to resort to force. The YSP exploited this emotional weakness of the YPC and its leaders and their lack of desire to shed Yemeni blood. In my opinion, had the executive and legislative authorities used their constitutional right, the party would have been the first to use force.

[Al-Daqqaq] How long will that situation continue? Do you not agree with me that the whole of Yemen is in a real predicament?

[Al-Iryani] Let us go back to the Pledge and Accord Document which—despite what the YSP says about it is the criterion by which we should be bound, now that the people's control over their constitutional institutions is held up by the YSP's will.

The document has become binding for the party at the local, Arab, and world levels. The party could have ruined everything before the document was signed. It is hard for it now to discredit the document.

The document has a provision to prevent the use of force in case of a political dispute. It also has a provision that prevents the introduction of any change in the military setup as well as on building a simple, rather than complex, Yemeni state, as the party puts it.

If this military aspect of the document is implemented, I believe that we can start to emerge from the crisis, not by coercing the YSP, but by knowing where its road ends. Personally, I cannot know the end of the party's road. That is unless it ends up "drawing power from the military" rather than from the majority. The party imposes that kind of power, because it draws power from the military rather than from the majority, which is the modern and civilized democratic principle.

[Al-Daqqaq] Have Arab mediation efforts succeeded in steering the crisis toward a solution?

[Al-Iryani] Mediators talk about ways out of the crisis. Serious mediation was based on a united Yemeni state. No mediator has requested anything different.

[Al-Daqqaq] It was said that some mediators have raised the idea of withdrawing troops to the positions they held before unity.

[Al-Iryani] I think that this request seeks to impose partition.

[Al-Daqqaq] What was the GPC response to that request?

[Al-Iryani] Absolute rejection of the principle. I have the honor to announce that I was one of the reasons behind stalling the "Salalah" meeting, because I rejected the request for withdrawing troops. We disagreed on what we would tell the people after the president's and vice president's meeting. President Salih had told the vice president ('Ali Salim al-Bid) that the withdrawal of the northern troops from the south and the southern troops from the north was rejected and that if we wanted to reassure the people about the military situation we would have to implement the provisions of the Pledge and Accord Document. When we got together to phrase the statement, Brother Yasin Sa'id Nu'man presented the picture indirectly to give the impression that we had consented to the principle of withdrawing the troops. I refused to issue an unclear statement.

The GPC' position is to reject the troops' return to the pre-22 May situation. Unity was established upon a certain agreement and withdrawing the troops is a violation of that agreement, which approved the retention of northern troops in the south and southern troops in the north as a safety valve for this unity. Withdrawing the troops would be an annulment of unity.

[Al-Daqqad] Does the YSP insist on that request?

[Al-Iryani] Yes. We view this as completely backing down on the unity agreement. It is the first true backing down on that agreement.

[Al-Daqqaq] How true are reports that the GPC has reservations on the Egyptian-United Arab Emirates [USE] mediation and holding a Yemeni meeting in Cairo?

[Al-Iryani] This is totally untrue. I attended the meeting between President Salih, Egyptian Minister Safwat al-Sharif, and UAE Minister al-Nu'aymi. I believe that mediation is proceeding along a good course based on the implementation of the Pledge and Accord Document, particularly its military aspects. The Congress cannot have any reservations about a mediation that pursues that course.

As for the tour of Ambassador Badr Hammam [Mubarak's special envoy to Yemen], he has received the demands of the YSP, basically the withdrawal of troops. We rejected that request. Therefore, it was wise of Egypt to quit discussing such requests. The new joint mediation is suitable and pursues a different course. It did not put forward specific ideas. The main question and all efforts revolve around finding a way out of the crisis.

[Al-Daqqaq] Could there be a peaceful way out of the crisis?

[Al-Iryani] Yes. It starts with taking the teeth out of the militarized people in the YSP. The YSP accuses the north and the GPC of being a militarized society. I can confirm that the YSP is handling the crisis through the military and views it from a purely military perspective, not from a comprehensive awareness of the interests of the Yemeni people.

[Al-Daqqaq] Why does the YSP insist on the withdrawal of the troops?

[Al-Iryani] I have already stated that withdrawing the troops means a return to partition. I do not like or intend to analyze ill will. It is enough for me to see ill will, and the YSP is handling the crisis with ill will.

[Al-Daqqaq] Do you believe that the crisis has become too complicated for anybody to keep up with it and that calls for separation and partition have started to be heard here and there?

[Al-Iryani] We now hear calls within the YSP that are totally alien to the concept of the "oneness" of the Yemeni society. Within the YSP, you hear people saying that the Yemeni society is made up of a northern society and a southern society. If they talk about the absence of oneness within the Yemeni society, it naturally follows that the northerners will be northerners and the southerners will be southerners and this is a fact that the YSP must deal with and bear its consequences [sentence as published].

[Al-Daqqaq] You keep talking about the YSP in the south. What about the GPC in the north?

[Al-Iryani] This is not the case at all in the south. The southerners in the GPC fully believe in the wholeness of Yemeni society. As for the YSP, the issue is no longer that of the unity of the homeland, which is something that the YSP has gone beyond. It now talks about the duality of the society, which is a serious matter.

[Al-Daqqaq] Do you agree with me that there is Arab and international sympathy with the YSP's stands and views?

[Al-Iryani] That was at the beginning, but things have become clearer now. Their sympathy was based on exterior signs without getting to know the ulterior motivations. When the exterior and ulterior motivations became one, the international community discovered that the YSP's goal is not dialogue or the Pledge and Agreement Document. The world community started to discover the YSP's real intentions. But I am afraid that exposing the YSP's ulterior motives will result in a bloody struggle equal to that of the al-Khawarij [early Islamic sect].

[Al-Daqqaq] What is the truth concerning reports about Sanaa's purchase of chemical weapons and cluster bombs?

[Al-Iryani] These are false allegations that do not warrant a response. But let me tell you that our brothers in the YSP are newcomers to the world of capitalist brokers. They fell easy prey to these brokers. Someone came and said to them: We have sold cluster bombs to Sanaa and we are willing to sell them to you. They were so naive and shallow-minded that they believed the broker. I think that they bought, or were about to buy. They later said that the north had bought prohibited weapons. This is not true. Cluster bombs are not "children's toys" sold on the market. We know what they are, who produces them, and the restrictions imposed on selling and buying them. If anything, such talk reflects irresponsibility, not only at the national, but also at the international level. How can they talk so simply about a matter that serious?

Let me ask; if the fighting is among the Yemenis, which Yemeni deserves a cluster bomb?

If the fight is with the YSP and its military, it is unacceptable to think that they deserve a cluster bomb. Do our brothers in the YSP think that we alone deserve these bombs?

[Al-Daqqaq] What about terrorism?

[Al-Iryani] Let me explain things to you. At the last cabinet meeting in Ta'izz, it was agreed to develop a security plan covering all cases of terrorism. The interior minister put it forward; it was prepared with the YSP's full participation. We were surprised to find that the plan covered nine terrorist cases only, although the YSP had said that they lost 154 martyrs. I was the first to object to the report, which was incomplete. The party claims to have had 154 martyrs and accuses a partner in the ruling process (the Congress) of being behind the matter. How then could they approve the report and a security plan that covers nine cases only?

The surprise was that the interior minister announced before everybody that the plan, the report, and the list of cases were worked out in coordination with the YSP. It became clear that many of the cases were criminally rather than politically motivated. How could the party claim that it was up against a terrorist campaign when all it cited were nine cases?

[Al-Daqqaq] This is on the domestic level. But what about the existence of terrorist camps used by the Afghan Arabs?

[Al-Iryani] The only camp that the YSP has mentioned is the one in the [al-Maraqishah] area. The party announced that it took control of this camp and arrested 85 terrorists. So far the YSP has not brought any one of them to trial. The talk about terrorism is designed to defame Yemen and to prove that there are international terrorist forces in Yemen working to cause harm to others.

[Al-Daqqaq] The conflict is now taking an economic form. What do the military movements toward the oil and gas regions mean?

[Al-Iryani] There are no economic interests. The YSP is seeking its own interest and trying to find justifications to maintain the crisis.

[Al-Daqqaq] Have the differences between the YPC and the Reform Party [hizb al-islah], the third partner in the government, ended?

[Al-Iryani] Differences of opinion usually take place, but they are not continuous. I wish the crisis with the YSP were like that—agree and disagree. But the YSP is managing the crisis on the basis of the principle of reaching disagreement and not agreement, particularly with us, the YPC. The party's plan in managing the crisis is to close the doors to agreement and carry the crisis to the end.

[Al-Daqqaq] What can now be done to contain the crisis?

[Al-Iryani] There is nothing that can be done except to implement the Pledge and Accord Document and deploy the forces in a way that would prevent secession and fighting. This is the only solution. The forces are deployed in a way that would not prevent fighting and could lead to secession. What is needed is to redeploy them to prevent fighting and prevent one party from seceding. This is what the YPC can offer.

[Al-Daqqaq] And politically?

[Al-Iryani] President 'Abdallah Salih has often told all mediators: "Ask the YSP what its demands are in a united Yemen and under a pluralistic system." We in the YPC think that we have made big political concessions to satisfy the YSP. But the YSP is not satisfied. It took the premiership and nine ministerial portfolios. It also has a seat in the presidential council. Even on the basis of population, the party has taken more seats in the House of Representatives than proportionally it deserves. We made all these concessions for the sake of unity. We accept them. But we refuse to make concessions for the sake of secession.

Mortar Shells Fired Near Saddam's Palace

PM2504143194 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 23 Apr 94 p 6

[Unattributed report: "Saddam's Palace Shelled"]

[Text] London, AL-HAYAH—Reliable Iraqi opposition sources have confirmed to AL-HAYAH that at dawn on 15 April four 60-mm mortar shells were fired in the direction of the Republican Palace, located in Baghdad's Karradat Maryam on the Tigris river.

They said that the shells were fired from a position opposite the palace somewhere in the Abu-Nuwwas Street, which runs parallel to the Tigris in the eastern Karradah quarter on the al-Rasafah side. Three shells fell on the palace and the fourth fell in the river.

Unified Iraqi National Congress [UINC] sources have told AL-HAYAH that "some members of the Iraqi National Assembly (parliament) and some Army officers have taken refuge in Irbil," which is under Kurdistan Front control.

A statement issued by the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI] said that "the special security organ in Baghdad arrested Staff Major General 'Abd-al-Malik al-Juburi on a charge of covering up embezzlement at the al-Radwaniyah military industries plant." SAIRI sources said that al-Juburi, who was commander of the 10th Armored Division during the war with Iran, "was recently released after being sentenced to seven years in prison on suspicion of complicity in the coup attempt plotted by a number of officers from the al-Jubur tribe after the Gulf war."

Meanwhile Kurdish administration sources have told AL-HAYAH that Iran has amassed large forces from the 5th and 11th Corps of the Revolutionary Guard supported by tanks and artillery on the borders with Iraq, in the area opposite Banjwin to the east of al-Sulaymaniyah Governorate. They added that the Iraqi Kurdish villages of Nukan, Tuqla, Kurah Shir, and Bidlan [last four names as transliterated] were shelled again. Most inhabitants of these villages have had to leave before as a result of previous Iranian aggression.

On 24 April an Iranian force entered the village of Kani Khan in the Banjwin area after shelling it. The same sources described the situation on the Iraqi-Iranian border as tense.

SAIRI Reports Attack on Iraqi Intelligence Headquarters

LD2504215894 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 2100 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] The Iraqi opposition has said that a group of its forces attacked the intelligence headquarters of the Iraqi regime in the Tuwaytha area of the city of Basrah.

A statement from the opposition Supreme Assembly for the Islamic Revolution [SAIRI] in Iraq said that the group used rocket launchers in their attack, which led to the killing and wounding of a number of members of the Iraqi regime's intelligence service, in addition to causing extensive damage to the building.

The statement indicates that the henchmen of the Iraqi regime carried out extensive searches of the area and a number of people were arrested.

The SAIRI statement adds that the governor of Baghdad has issued a decision to reorganize the so-called popular army.

'Aziz, Ekeus Meet; Talks Resume

JN2504203694 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1930 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Baghdad, 25 Apr (INA)—Official talks between Iraq and the UN Security Council's Special Commission were resumed at the Foreign Ministry this evening.

The Iraqi side to the talks was headed by Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz, while UN Special Commission Chairman Rolf Ekeus led the Commission's side.

The Iraqi side comprised Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf; Lieutenant General Engineer 'Amir Muhammad Rashid, director of the Military Industrialization Organization; Dr. Riyad al-Qaysi, under secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and several other officials. The Special Commission's side comprised Zifferero, deputy director of the International Atomic Energy Agency; Tim Terevan, official spokesman for the UN Special Commission; and several specialists.

The IRAQI NEWS AGENCY has learned that a joint statement on the talks will be issued tomorrow.

In reply to a question posed by a correspondent of the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY, Rolf Ekeus said that he will submit a report to the UN Security Council on the progress and outcome of the talks as soon as he returns to New York.

Ekeus Comments on Talks

JN2604094094 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0920 GMT 26 Apr 94

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Apr (INA)—Rolf Ekeus, chairman of the UN Special Commission, has described his talks with Iraqi officials over the past two days as good and constructive.

Ekeus told the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY his talks addressed political and technical points. He called the talks a professional and ongoing exercise.

Asked whether the talks sought to work out a timetable for long-term monitoring and the implementation of Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687, Ekeus said the subject was discussed in detail.

It is up to the UN Security Council to lift the sanctions, since such a move is a political decision, Ekeus said.

Iraqi officials and the Special Commission, he said, are now drafting a joint statement about the result of the latest talks.

The IRAQI NEWS AGENCY has learned that subcommittees on both sides began holding closed sessions to prepare the statement. Rolf Ekeus is due to hold a news conference this afternoon at the al-Rashid Hotel where he is staying.

Assembly Meets, Notes Arab-European Dialogue, Blockade

JN2404173194 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1530 GMT 24 Apr 94

[Text] Baghdad, 24 Apr (INA)—The National Assembly held a session today under the chairmanship of Deputy Speaker Ghanim 'Aziz Khadduri.

At the beginning of the session, the people's representatives discussed a report, which the Assembly presented to the annual conference of the Arab-European parliamentary dialogue held in Paris from 14 to 17 April. Sixteen Arab parliaments and 13 European parliaments, as well as representatives of the European Parliament, the Arab League, and the European Union also attended.

Assembly members Bashir Hammud al-Ghazali and 'Abd-al-Karim Jihad who participated in the conference said that participants stressed the need to implement Security Council resolutions calling for the achievement of a comprehensive and just peace in the region.

Regarding the imperialist-Zionist conspiracy that is targeting Iraq, they said that participants also acknowledged the suffering of the Iraqi people as a result of the continued unjust blockade. They also expressed their hope that the implementation of Security Council resolutions would lead to the lifting of the blockade.

The assembly then elected a permanent committee for environment. 'Abd-al-Karim Jihad was elected as chairman of the committee, Raja' al-Shawi as deputy chairman, and 'Abd-al-Majid Khunayjir as rapporteur.

Health Minister Discusses Sanctions With Foreign Visitors

JN2504162794 Baghdad INA in English 1450 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Baghdad, Apr. 25, INA—Health Minister Dr Umid Midhat Mubarak met here today member of the International Committee of the Democrat Jurists Reneih Rydel [name as received].

The minister explained, during the meeting, plight of 18-million population in Iraq as a result of continuation of the blockade and its effects on the health sector.

Meanwhile, the minister received the Turkish worker delegation headed by Hussein Baycal [name as received], the secretary of Roads and Bridges Trade Union.

The minister reviewed impact of the blockade on the population health, especially the children as a result of acute shortages of food and medicine.

The Turkish figure denounced the unjust blockade imposed on Iraq, expressing readiness to cooperate in various spheres.

Baghdad Mayor: Embargo Forcing Halt to Service Projects

JN2504161394 Baghdad INA in English 1430 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Baghdad, Apr. 25, INA—Mayor of Baghdad, Tahir Muhammad Hassun, condemned the most brutal attack to which Baghdad had exposed by the United States and its allies in January 1991.

In a statement to the INA, Mr. Hassun slammed the continuation of the blockade imposed on the people of Iraq which had direct harmful effects on the environment and the public health.

He dealt with suffering of the municipal units under shadow of the blockade, saying these units were facing acute dearth in performance after the aggression owing to poor spare parts and other necessary equipment and the lack of cadres.

He also said that because of the harsh circumstances of the blockade and its direct and negative impact, the Baghad Municipality had decided to stop implementing a number of cultural, touristic and service projects.

Mr. Hassun appealed to all peace-loving people and forces around the world to understand Iraq's position and cooperate with the aim of breaking the unjustifiable blockade.

KDP Denies Barzani Set 'Preconditions' for Syria Trip

PM2504134694 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 23 Apr 94 p6

[Unattributed report: "Clarification From Kurdistan Democratic Party: No Barzani Conditions for Visiting Damascus"]

[Excerpt] London, AL-HAYAH—The Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] has hailed the "strong" relations between its leader Mas'ud Barzani and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad.

AL-HAYAH has received a clarification from the party in Salah-al-Din in northern Iraq, which said:

"In your 20 April 1994 edition, you published a report under the headline "Barzani Sets Three Conditions for Acceptance of Damascus Invitation." In the interest of the truth, we wish to make the following clarification:

"1. Our party's relations with Syria are strong and based on mutual respect and understanding, and we attach much importance to these relations.

"2. President Hafiz al-Asad received Barzani on all his previous visits. Barzani's relations with President al-Asad are strong and warm.

"3. We wish to point out that Barzani would never visit Syria on preconditions. Syria is his own country and the gates of Damascus were and are still open. There is no need for preconditons between brothers." [passage omitted]

Defense Minister Attends Military Exercise, Comments

JN2604070094 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Defense Minister fighter Staff General 'Ali Hasan al-Majid has attended a military exercise and a subsequent analytical conference. At the beginning of the exercise, fighter staff General Iyad Futayyih Khalifah, the army chief of staff and the exercise director, gave a briefing on the purpose of the exercise and the lessons to be learned from it. At the end of the analytical conference, the fighter defense minister blessed the efforts of the commission of controllers for their accurate observations, which are designed to arrive at the best results. He thanked the trainers and executors for their (?positive) efforts to make the exercises successful and to boost the (?Army's) combat ability.

Ba'th Official, Minister Receive Jordanian IAF Delegation

JN2304184194 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1452 GMT 23 Apr 94

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Apr (INA)—'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abd-al-Ghafur, member of the Iraq Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and secretary general of the National Progressive and Patriotic Front, today received a delegation from the Jordanian Islamic Action Front [IAF] under [Jordanian House of Representatives member] 'Abdallah al-'Akayilah.

Members of the Jordanian delegation expressed high appreciation of Iraq's heroic, honorable stand under the brave leadership of President Saddam Husayn. They stressed that the aggression against Iraq is an aggression against the Arab nation, because Iraq is the symbol of the Arab nation's awakening and the leader of its struggle for the sake of liberation and independence. They stressed the inevitable victory of the banner of faith carried by President Saddam Husayn.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Mun'im Ahmad Salih, minister of awqaf and religious affairs, also received the IAF delegation under 'Abdallah al-'Akayilah.

During the meeting, the minister reviewed the dimensions of the unjust blockade imposed on the children, women, and elderly of Iraq. He said those who are besieging the Iraqi people are exercising double standards and do not hesitate to select oppressive resolutions to kill the lively spirit of the free, proud Iraqi people.

'Abdallah al-'Akayilah praised the militant, nationalist, and faithful campaign led by mujahid President Saddam Husayn. He said this campaign stresses the soundness of the Iraqi course, because it provides youth with immunity and explains to them the evil aggressive objectives targeting Arabism and Islam.

ASBP, Jordan's IAF Sign Plan To Develop 'Militant Ties'

JN2604094294 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0840 GMT 26 Apr 94

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Apr (INA)—The Arab Socialist Ba'th Party [ASBP] and Jordan's Islamic Action Front [IAF] have signed an action program to develop their militant ties so as to advance the Arab nation's aspirations for liberation and advancement.

Signed by the foreign relations head at the Iraq Command of the ASBP and Dr. 'Abdallah al-'Akayilah, an IAF's Executive Bureau member, the agreement calls for drafting a cultural program highlighting the Arab nation's identity and message. The program calls for extending support to the Arab Popular Forces Conference. It also provides for an exchange of visits, publications, literature, and expertise in the ideological and political spheres in the best interest of the Arab people in the two sisterly countries.

The IAF delegation left Baghdad this morning, concluding a visit of several days to Iraq.

Rebels Reportedly Attack Regime Posts in al-Nasiriyah

NC2504185094 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Iraqi opposition sources report that the revolutionaries of the south have attacked the headquarters of the district governor and security department in (al-Ghdayliyah), al-Nasiriyah Governorate, killing and wounding several Iraqi regime personnel.

A statement issued by the Kurdistan Bureau of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq said that following the attack, the regime arrested many people in that district and a number of its agents on charges that they did not prevent the attack.

The statement added that the regime launched a large attack on Abu Saddah and al-Mazra' in (al-Mudaynah) District, al-Basrah Governorate, displaced the residents, and destroyed their homes with dynamite. The statement said the Iraqi regime is about to complete preparations for a large offensive on (al-Jakka) marshes in al-'Amarah Governorate.

Kurdish Radio Reports Iranian Artillery Bombardment

NC2504172794 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] The Iranian forces shelled with large-caliber artillery the (Nashero) and (Shatal) regions and villages in (Kanikhan), Banjwin District, on 24 April. The shelling caused no casualties but inflicted grave material damage. Previous Iranian bombardment of these areas killed five people and wounded six others.

Kurdish Authorities Arrest Regime Collaborators

NC2504172594 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Security authorities in Kurdistan Province have discovered a criminal, treacherous network that operated in accordance with plans and instructions from the Iraqi regime's intelligence agencies.

The [word indistinct] personnel in al-Sulaymaniyah Governorate arrested the members of this treacherous network. After conducting proper investigations, the criminals admitted that they committed mean acts under the supervision of traitor Shaykh Salam Chulmak who admitted his direct ties with the Iraqi intelligence agency officials. The ring members are Radwan Rida Ahmad; Anwar 'Abdallah Faris; [first name indistinct] Muhammad [third name indistinct], alias Mahmud; Jawhar 'Aziz 'Abdallah; and 'Abd-al-Wahid Siddiq Ahmad. In 1992 and '93, the five criminals were involved in attacks on UN centers and in assassination attempts on their personnel.

A group comprising Rahman Ahmad, Baha'-al-Din Karim Sa'id, and [first name indistinct] Latif Rashid murdered [name indistinct], a Belgian national who was a coordinator in the Handicap International Organization, and wounded his French companion (?Shunmak) on 22 March last year.

The criminals will be shown on television screens and presented to other media in the next few days.

Central Bank Issues New 100-Dinar Bill for Circulation

JN2604073294 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Statement issued by Tariq Talib al-Takmaji, governor of the Central Bank of Iraq; date not given—read by announcer]

[Excerpt] In accordance with Article 38 of the Central Bank of Iraq [CBI] Amended Law No. 94 of (?1986), and based on Presidential Decree No. 105 of 1994, we would like to announce to the esteemed public that the CBI will issue for circulation a new 100-dinar bill. [passage omitted including indistinct portions]

Rabin on Peace With Syria, Palestinians

NC2504183594 Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 22 Apr 94 pp 24-26, 77

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin by Muhammad Wahbi—place and date not given]

[Text] [Wahbi] Reports from Washington say that Dennis Ross, U.S. coordinator of the peace process, and Martin Indyk, President Clinton's assistant for Middle East affairs, will arrive in the region to give impetus to the peace process, particularly the Syrian-Israeli track. You have said that President al-Asad has not done even one percent of what he should be doing toward the peace process, but the Syrians say that he has done much more than that. He has stated that he is prepared to fully recognize Israel in exchange for full withdrawal from the Golan. He also has gone a long way by explaining to President Clinton what he means by a comprehensive peace with Israel. Why don't you for your part travel the same distance that President al-Asad has travelled by specifying what you mean by withdrawal from the Golan?

[Rabin] First of all, I am not aware that the two U.S. officials you have named will come to the region. As far as I know, since it has been decided to resume the talks in Washington at the end of April, U.S. Secretary of State Christopher and the U.S. peace team will visit all the countries participating in the peace process to get the process going. This is all I can say in this regard. I am going to Moscow for four days next month and when I come back, Christopher will be in the region. He will visit Israel the week after next. In the meantime, we are continuing the negotiations with the Palestinians, primarily in Cairo. We are also negotiating with them on economic issues in Paris. President Mubarak and the Egyptian Government are hosting the negotiations in Cairo. I believe that President Mubarak has made a great and positive contribution toward continuing this process and eliminating the obstacles facing it. As regards the other parties, undoubtedly the position of Syria is of major importance to the peace process. I have previously stated, and I still believe, that Israel is a democratic state. Its people must be convinced, now that we have entered the peace process, that we must achieve peace with all parties in the region. Naturally, no one could do what President al-Sadat did in terms of making a breakthrough in the Arab-Israeli conflict. There is no doubt that President Mubarak is developing and backing the peace resulting from this breakthrough. As for Syria, I refer to what the newspaper TISHRIN, the official paper in Syria, published two days ago. It severely criticized Oman for hosting an Israeli delegation to talk about water issues. If such an attitude shows a readiness for peace on the part of Syria, then I don't know what opposition to peace would be like. Also, do not forget that in the joint news conference between Clinton and al-Asad following their talks, in which you said the Syrian president explained his definition of full peace, none of the Israeli papers were invited to the conference. Israeli journalists were not allowed to ask any questions. In addition, Syria is hosting antipeace organizations. It allows the Ahmad Jibril-led organization and others to attack the PLO for signing the Declaration of Principles with Israel and the Cairo Agreement and at the same time urges the Palestinians to undermine the peace process. More serious than this is that Syria provides all facilities to all types of attacks on Israel, whether from Lebanon or other places. All this does not prove that Syria has made a strategic decision to make peace with Israel.

I also do not believe in the possibility of achieving peace with Syria without secret meetings. We all remember that a secret meeting took place between Major General Hasan al-Tuhami [an aide of late Egyptian President al-Sadat] and Moshe Dayan in Morocco in 1977. We also remember that we were engaged with the PLO in secret talks in Oslo over six months, after which a Declaration of Principles was reached with the PLO.

Our government was the first Israeli Government to accept Resolution 242 as a basis for peace with Syria, which includes agreement to withdraw from the Golan as I have announced many times before, and this prompted the Israelis to attack me.

However, the geographical dimension of the withdrawal cannot be determined until after Israel knows the full meaning of the Syrians' term full peace. President al-Asad may have explained what that meant to President Clinton as you have indicated, but I have no knowledge that Syria's delegate to the Washington peace talks has explained this to his Israeli counterpart at the talks. So I cannot understand the meaning of a full peace as envisaged by the Syrians. Besides, the problems goes beyond the mere linking of peace and withdrawal and we have to know the meaning of peace, the extent of withdrawal, and the security phases that this withdrawal will pass through.

Let me remind you that the Camp David Accord was reached after one-year-long talks, from the time President al-Sadat visited Jerusalem in November 1977 to September 1978, and another six months were needed to reach a peace treaty in March 1979. Six months later we withdrew to the Ra's Muhammad-al-'Arish Line and then began the normalization between the two countries by exchanging embassies and we completed the withdrawal beyond the border as was agreed upon in April 1982.

In the one-year period between President al-Sadat's visit to Jerusalem and the signing of the Camp David Accord, the Israeli prime minister was invited to Ismailia and the Mena House Conference was held. We also held talks at the highest level before the Camp David Accord, 13 days after Egyptian, Israeli, and U.S. leaders met behind the walls of Camp David, which was isolated from the rest of the world. So far, nothing of this kind or similar to it has happened between us and Syria.

[Wahbi] I have spoken with some Syrians about your demand for secret talks with Syria, but they told me that the Palestinians' experience in the secret talks with you does not really encourage them to repeat the same experiment with you.

[Rabin] Why?

[Wahbi] Because of the many difficulties the Palestinians are encountering right now, particularly since some Palestinian leaders believe that the PLO was cheated in the Oslo agreement. The talks leading to that agreement were held in secret and no third party, like the Americans, was represented in them.

[Rabin] The difficulties existing now are due to the fact that the Declaration of Principles between Israel and the PLO tackled much more complex matters than those that might complicate matters between Israel and any other Arab state. An agreement with any Arab state would mean defining peace, dividing borders, withdrawal stages, and the interrelation between a phased withdrawal and the normalization process. When it comes to Palestinians, we are trying to attain a certain goal in the peace process in its entirety. That goal is how to establish peaceful coexistence between two geographically overlapping entities. This creates much cause for strife on a daily basis. Many other details will need to be tackled if you want to guarantee success for peaceful coexistence between these two overlapping entities.

Moreover, there are people among both Palestinians and Israelis who oppose peace and want to ruin it. Among the Palestinians, extremist groups like "Hamas" and al-Jihad Organization practice terrorism, although they know very well that the Israeli people accept a political solution. But most of these Israelis ask: If this solution does not bring peace to us in our daily life, what kind of peace do you seek through the current peace process? The operations that "Hamas" and al-Jihad are carrying out create a vicious circle of violence between the two sides. This makes an agreement with the Palestinians much more difficult than with any Arab state.

[Wahbi] Egypt used to say to our Arab brothers that Israel can be very difficult and might insist on the smallest details in negotiations, but it implements any agreement it signs to the letter. I have to tell you that many of us have difficulty in repeating what we used to say to Arabs about the Israelis.

[Rabin] Why? Why?

[Wahbi] Since you say that agreed dates for implementing the Declaration of Principles are not sacred, what prevents you from announcing later on that any of the Declaration's words is not sacred?

[Rabin] I will only give you an example to show you that there is no justification whatsoever for saying that. We did not delay for a single day any previously agreed date for negotiations with the Palestinians. They delayed negotiations with us for a month. The opponents of peace in Israel asked me why I did not suspend negotiations with the Palestinians after the killing of Israelis in the "Afula and Hadera" incidents. I told them that if we did that in reaction to those who killed the Israelis with the goal of ruining the peace process we would be giving the perpetrators the best reward for their actions. We did not delay negotiations for a single day. The Palestinians have to realize that they cannot say that dates are sacred. They said that they were delaying talks for a month because of a certain horrid incident to achieve what was agreed upon and to show commitment to the dates specified in the Declaration of Principles. However, I say that if both sides are prepared to reach middle solutions, which they have already done several times, we will implement the agreement on putting the Declaration of Principles into effect within two or three weeks at the most after signing it.

[Wahbi] It is also being said that if Rabin is causing all these difficulties while negotiating about the implementation of an agreement that is not related to the questions of sovereignty, the settlements, and Jerusalem, which have been postponed until negotiations on the final status of the occupied territories start, then what kind of difficulties could he cause when the time comes to discuss these topics at the final stage of the negotiations?

[Rabin] Why are these suspicions raised? The Palestinians and Israelis have agreed that their agreement would not be the same as Israel's agreement with the other Arab states. First of all, the Palestinians do not represent a country, but an organization. Second, it was clear to them and to us that when the facts change and when the Palestinians are able to run every aspect of their life, cities, villages and the enormous responsibilities that this entails, the more difficult issues can then be handled. This is because they would then be in a better position to handle such issues. Also, the atmosphere then would be more suitable because bridges of confidence between the two peoples will have been built, or at least the mutual hatred and suspicions will have eased.

[Wahbi] It is known that the self-rule idea goes back to the Likud and to [Zionist leader] Jabotinsky. The Labor Party has always talked about regional solutions that involve exchanging land for peace. Why, then, this exaggerated insistence by the Labor Party on the terms of the self-rule?

[Rabin] First of all, the Palestinians do not like to use the term self-rule because it appeared in the Camp David Accord. They prefer to use the abbreviation PISGA, which stands for Palestinian Interim Self-Government Authority. For our part, we have decided not to get into an argument with them over names. Thus, the term self-rule was mentioned in the letter of invitation to the Madrid Conference on this basis. For me, I believe that there are two stages: a transitional stage for building bridges of confidence and changing some realities, then comes the stage in which the final solution will be handled and in which we will be ready for regional solutions. We have pointed out that we do not want to assume responsibility for most of the Palestinians in the territories, but this does not mean that we will be prepared to withdraw to the pre-1967 lines.

[Wahbi] It is said that by creating obstacles to the implementation of the Declaration of Principles, Rabin is damaging the credibility of the moderate Arab forces, particularly Yasir 'Arafat's position. It is also said that if Rabin continues to create such obstacles, this will cause chaos in the occupied territories and might cause problems for Israel itself. What is your comment?

[Rabin] I am not creating any problems, nor am I delaying the implementation of any agreement. If you read the Declaration of Principles you will be certain that agreement has to be reached through negotiations on each phase stipulated in the Declaration.

We have not postponed the negotiations and are ready to pursue the efforts to reach an agreement that will realize the goals of the transitional phase, overwhelm the opposition from some forces on both sides, achieve security for the Israelis, and grant the Palestinian council the authority to run the Palestinians' affairs.

[Wahbi] I believe you have promised to face the problem of the settlements in the future. The question now is how can you deal with this difficult problem with all the trouble it entails if you are currently refusing to evacuate about 20-30 settlers from (Notetrim) settlement and also refuse to evacuate a handful of settlers from Hebron even after the al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre?

[Rabin] Because the agreement is very clear. It stipulates that all settlements will remain during the transitional phase and the PLO has signed that agreement. We will turn to the settlements when we negotiate a final solution. I expect the Palestinians to honor their commitments as they expect me to honor mine.

[Wahbi] About two weeks ago Israeli television showed a documentary in which the camera proved that the settlers, at least in some case, issue orders to the Israel army instead of the army issuing orders to them. How true is this?

[Rabin] I have not seen this program, although I heard about it. In any case, that situation does not exist and for our part we will prevent that from happening. We have issued additional orders to make sure that such an impression is not made in future, because the army is responsible for the security of both the Palestinians and Israelis and that is its role.

[Wahbi] It is also being said that you are using the talks with the Palestinians to pressure the Syrians and vice versa. Why don't you negotiate with everybody at the same time and with the same zeal?

[Rabin] We have not suspended the Washington talks, the Syrians decided to suspend them, then the other parties followed suit. We are not engaged in any "game" at the expense of other parties. We deal with every Arab party on the basis of the chances of success that each issue presents. We thought we were close to reaching an agreement with Jordan, but unfortunately our efforts have not brought results. For our part, we have no regional problems with Jordan basically. We have absolutely no regional problems with Lebanon, but there are security problems because the Lebanese Government does not enjoy sovereignty over all its territories. We are not after a single inch of Lebanese territory. There are international borders between us and Lebanon. All we want is for the government there to be able to disengage [as published] the private military groups, such as the Druze and Phalangist militias and others. So far, the Lebanese Government has not done anything to prove its ability to control south Lebanon.

[Wahbi] Let me ask one final question, which concerns Israel's internal affairs. How far is Foreign Minister Peres authorized by you to negotiate with the Palestinians? In other words, does Minister Peres have a real and full authorization to reach an agreement with the PLO or do you keep the final decision on the Palestinians in your hands? If so, why do you refuse to meet with President 'Arafat, with whom you have not met for a long time?

[Rabin] Every time Peres met with 'Arafat he had full authorization, and reports about a limited authorization are nothing but nonsense. Also, I believe that no one should recommend a meeting between me and Chairman 'Arafat before everything is made to prepare for such a meeting. This is because if we meet and fail to reach an agreement, it will cause disappointment and frustration that in fact will defeat our purpose of reaching an agreement that can be implemented.

Rabin Says Ready To Put Off Nonsecurity Issues

TA2504175894 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Gadi Sukenik reports from Moscow that Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said he is prepared to put off dealing with any issue not tied to security or law and order in Gaza and Jericho until after the signing of the agreement with the PLO. Our political correspondent Gadi Sukenik, who is with the prime minister's entourage, reports that Prime Minister Rabin told a Moscow news conference a few minutes ago that he expects the Syrian media and its leadership—meaning al-Asad, of course—to state publicly its true desire for peace.

Peres: No Golan Settlements To Remain After Land Ceded

TA2504161694 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Report by Tamar Asalem]

[Text] Knesset Member [MK] Avi Yehezqel asserted at today's meeting of the Labor caucus that two men are not equals among equals in the government and the faction. He was naturally referring to the prime minister and the foreign minister, who are steering the peace negotiations but keeping the faction in the dark. In response, Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres delivered an extended political review.

The faction members' questions focused on two issues: the conclusion of negotiations and the prime minister's remarks at a United Kibbutzim Movement forum concerning the evacuation of Golan Heights settlements. On the first issue, Peres repeated the remarks he made yesterday at the cabinet meeting:

[Begin Peres recording] There are no disagreements between Yitzhaq [Rabin] and me. We both believe the negotiations should be concluded. They could be dragged out through eternity, but I think—and that is the opinion of our colleagues in Cairo, too—that we should assemble all the outstanding issues in one cluster and resolve them in one fell swoop this coming weekend. [end recording]

Peres added that it had been agreed that only two issues will be left for Rabin's and 'Arafat's ruling: the size of Jericho, which the Palestinians want to be 100 square kilometers and Israel will agree to about 60 only; and the matter of the Palestinian policeman on the bridge. Peres stressed that Israel does not wish to leave any unresolved issues. The reports I receive indicate that the other side is likewise interested in wrapping the thing up, Peres said. [Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1400 GMT on 25 April adds that "addressing the Labor caucus, Shim'on Peres said that the reports he received from Cairo today reflect a certain optimism. He said that after the prime minister returns from Russia, all the finalized issues will have to be revisited and decisions will have to be made on the outstanding issues, such as the judicial procedures and the air and sea space."]

As for rumors about disagreements between the foreign minister and the prime minister, Peres clarified that they were totally baseless.

Peres was forced to parry another attack by faction members, including MK's Avigdor Qahalani and Eli Goldschmidt from the Golan Heights lobby, over the prime minister's remarks about settlement evacuation made at the United Kibbutzim Movement forum.

[Begin Peres recording] Want peace? There is not a single person who does not realize that peace entails a deep and painful change in the Golan Heights. Whoever is ready for a territorial compromise understands that if we cede territory, our settlements will not remain there. The settlements themselves are not going to want to remain. [end recording]

It will be noted that some faction members lauded the prime minister's remarks. Peres, however, asked the forum to refrain from discussing the issue while the prime minister is abroad.

Shahal on Peace Prospects, Ties With Gulf Emirates

TA2404133594 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 24 Apr 94 p A10

[ITIM report]

[Text] Moshe Shahal, minister of police, energy, and infrastructure, said on 22 April that peace arrangements with Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan would take form between the summer of 1994 and the beginning of 1995. The minister was speaking to the forum of managers for advancing managerial culture in Israel at Tel Aviv's Open University. He said that Israel was demanding a period of several years between the signing of a peace agreement with Syria and its actual implementation in order to enable the parties to examine whether the agreement holds under different rulers and whether it indeed includes all the components of a normal peace.

Shahal asserted that Israel wished to impose a 10-year waiting period between the signing and the initial implementation of the agreement. The Syrians were prepared to accept a period of three years, while the United States had suggested a seven-year moratorium. At any rate, he added, the question of time did not trouble Syrian President al-Asad since he was also interested in putting things off.

In Shahal's assessment, the negotiations will hit a logjam if we do not reach agreement by the end of 1994 or the beginning of 1995 because both the United States and Israel will enter an election period which will preclude any real progress in the peace process. "Ten minutes after the signing of a peace agreement with Syria, Lebanon will also sign an agreement with us. Jordan will sign even before the Syrians, as soon as there is a signal that Damascus and Jerusalem are about to reach agreement," Shahal said. He believes that soon after the peace agreements are made, five Muslim countries will establish diplomatic relations with Israel.

Shahal also said that the Gulf emirates, mainly Oman and Qatar, believe Israel could protect the area against an Iraqi or Iranian invasion and have an interest in the peace arrangements because they estimate the agreements would provide the emirates with protection. He estimated that Qatar will announce the joint gas project with Israel in May, adding: "I will not be surprised if they invite Israelis for business there." At the same time, Oman has accepted the possibility of starting business contacts with Israel even without granting it diplomatic recognition.

Rothschild Interviewed on Gaza Transferal

TA2204162894 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (LESHABAT supplement) in Hebrew 22 Apr 94 pp 12, 13, 26

[Interview with Major General Dani Rothschild, the coordinator of government activities in the territories, by Smadar Peri—place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [Peri] Major General Rothschild, do you believe 'Arafat?

[Rothschild] It is not a question of whether I believe him or not. The question is whether he can implement the agreement. I believe that he wants to; however, if 'Arafat does not realize that he is assuming responsibility for a system as complicated as that of a country—and whether or not he has sovereignty is of no significance here—and if the world does not understand that he requires aid on a large scale, then there is no chance of turning a new leaf.

[Peri] These are certainly good times. The coordinator of government activities in the territories is almost conducting public relations on behalf of 'Arafat.

[Rothschild] Definitely. Not because I like 'Arafat so much but because I want this agreement to succeed. If the Palestinian authority does not show the residents that it is better than we were in the civilian-economic sphere, there is no chance of this agreement ever being implemented.

We can hold talks in Cairo, Paris, and Washington until the sun goes down but if we fail to implement what is agreed upon because of a lack of resources, then what have we achieved? Their needs will grow threefold or fourfold after the agreement in comparison to their needs while we were in control. If we also consider the fact that they will be able to collect all the taxes they want to, then there will really be no chance of getting anything done.

[Peri] People are saying that 'Arafat is deliberately stalling because he does not want the agreement at all. He does not want to be the mayor of Jericho and is afraid of being assassinated in Gaza.

[Rothschild] I do not know if he is afraid. I think 'Arafat is becoming increasingly aware of the difficulties. I believe that one of his fears, which have accumulated during the negotiations, is that he will be unable to meet the needs and expectations of his public. He has no choice, however, because with every day that goes by without changes on the ground he loses more supporters of the agreement. Afterwards, things will be even more difficult for him.

The more profound and detailed the negotiations become, the more the Palestinians realize how complicated their problem will prove to be; how impossible it is to bring about changes in the field within a short time; and to what degree the shortage of resources dashes any hopes of meeting the public's expectations. They are frightened by the burden of responsibility they will have to assume and the scope of the needs they will have to fill with regard to a population who currently receives services in all walks of life.

[Peri] You are a member of the Israeli delegation to the economic talks with the Palestinians. How much money do they need in your assessment?

[Rothschild] Our budget stands at 300 million shekels this year. They will need at least three times that amount because our budget does not include security. Today, we finance the salaries of 400 policemen. The Palestinians are talking about 9,000 Palestinian policemen in Gaza and Jericho. Salaries are not everything, there is also maintenance. Whoever talks about adding 200 classrooms must understand that even after the construction work is over, one still has to pay wages to hundreds of teachers. They also want to increase the number of clerks, build residential apartment buildings, set up a sewage system.

[Peri] How do they perceive self-administration?

[Rothschild] It is easier to speak of Gaza because Jericho is a very isolated area. It all depends on the kind of resources the Palestinian authority will have at its disposal. According to studies carried out by us, the public's standard of living will drop by 20 to 25 percent compared to its present level, which is already low.

Unless a great deal of money is invested in the Gaza Strip very soon it will turn into a tinderbox. Not so much against Israel but primarily against the Palestinian rule. If people say that 'Arafat is frightened of an agreement, or at least hesitant, then that is the reason.

[Peri] What do you expect them to do?

[Rothschild] We are encouraging 'Arafat to appoint a council, but he is stalling. A decision should be made now on who is to head each system—health, education, customs, and so forth, and these people should be brought in so as to have time to overlap with us before they take charge. They have to set up an entire economic system and to man the tax authority whose staff resigned at the outset of the intifadah.

Under the agreement, they are committed to certain levels of income tax, VAT [value added tax], and customs. Yet they do not have a system which knows how to impose, calculate, and levy the taxes. You cannot build such a system in a day.

Rami, Nabil Sha'th's son, arrived this week to acquaint himself with the computer system which we are going to leave to the Palestinian administration in Gaza. He is still in shock. It is a sophisticated system, and they have no one to operate it. You cannot work from day to day. You have to train people in each sphere of life.

This week in Cairo, for instance, the transfer of the Finance Ministry's powers was discussed; namely, that Israel is to cancel all its contracts with suppliers. But they do not have answers to the most basic questions: How will they operate elevators? How will they obtain oxygen for hospitals? What will they do about all the daily systems based on these contracts?

[Peri] Have your public and secret meetings with Palestinians included meetings with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] people?

[Rothschild] Since Hamas is an illegal organization, people who meet me are only willing to admit to an affiliation with the universal Islamic network. I have spent many hours in conversation with these people. I acquired an in-depth acquaintance with how their network operates, what its objectives are, and how it seeks to achieve these objectives.

One of their leaders told me: We are no pistol revolution. We did it once in Egypt (the assassination of President al-Sadat), and the alternative is someone who is much more diffident, hesitant, and much more brutal. Therefore, our method is to cultivate the support of a broad social stratum. How? We invest in the target public everything the administration cannot invest.

[Peri] Is it possible that we screwed up, that we should have opted for the radicals?

[Rothschild] I definitely think we conducted contacts with people who do not necessarily represent the Palestinian society. The problem with Faysal al-Husayni and the other salon leaders was that their power stemmed from their affiliation with the PLO, and not from a self-built position in the Palestinian street. We conduct negotiations with them, but the street does not recognize them.

In my opinion, one of our mistakes was not having held sufficient contacts with the authentic leaders, and the intifadah has indeed generated such leaders. We could have found them in prisons. On the Palestinian street. One does not necessarily make political agreements with them, but a dialogue with them is definitely possible. But it should be understood: I will not propose—and I never have—that we hold contacts with Hamas, whose motto is the destruction of Israel.

[Peri] I understand from your answer that the agenda should have been turned around: We should have started with the local radicals—not Hamas—and bring in the Tunis wheeler-dealers afterward. We should have skipped al-Husayni, 'Ashrawi, and the likes.

[Rothschild] Yes. We should have started out by talking with the street leaders. With those who are capable of getting 5,000 or 10,000 people out to hurl stones. They would have been capable of getting the same 10,000 to extend olive branches. The PLO alone cannot do it.

I have always been in favor of launching a dialogue with the street leaders, because you can run the area with them, and they have no problem cooperating with us. Guys like Hisham 'Abd-al-Raziq or Sufyan Abu-Zayidah, who have served many years in prison—they are not afraid. They have already thrown their grenades. Faysal al-Husayni cannot criticize them, because they will immediately answer: And where have you been?

[Peri] If we indeed made a mistake in this issue, is it still possible to fix it?

[Rothschild] We are fixing it, because now we are holding a dialogue with representatives of the Palestinian street.

[Peri] It is still unclear who will rule the territories: 'Arafat and the people from Tunis, or the young local leadership?

[Rothschild] I am convinced that if the people from Tunis do not give the local youngsters a measure of control, they will find it very hard to rule. The young generation, however, will also find it hard to go it alone. Even if they are considered the leaders in the streets of Gaza, they have no funds. Only a combination of PLO funds—raised by regular contributions and organized by a well-ordered system—and the authentic local leadership, can provide some chances for normal functioning.

[Peri] Will the real problems in the territories surface only after the withdrawal, with the present level of terrorism being only a sort of prelude?

[Rothschild] I am not all that concerned about the security problem, although it tops our list of priorities. I believe the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] is strong enough to solve this problem eventually. It is very possible that the Palestinian police will be interested in proving it can cope with terrorism within the area under its jurisdiction, whereas terrorism will still prevail in the areas under our control.

[Peri] Do you believe that the Palestinian police will be able to squelch Hamas activity?

[Rothschild] I believe that the primary objective of the Palestinian police will be not to prevent Hamas attacks against us, but rather to foil attacks on the Palestinian council, to prevent Hamas taking over the streets and its attempts to disrupt daily affairs in Gaza and Jericho. They will leave it to us to foil Hamas attacks against Israel.

[Peri] If Israel has early warnings about a Hamas attack, will the Palestinian police cooperate with us, or will it leak the information to Hamas members?

[Rothschild] According to the agreement between us, if there is a warning about somebody who plans attacks against us, the PLO has to foil these attacks. We must remember, however, that the Palestinian police will not be homogeneous. There will probably be some people there whose opinions do not necessarily coincide with those of the PLO. There are enough people in Gaza who find this agreement utterly disagreeable and who will do everything possible to foil it, including attacks on Israelis and on the Palestinian autonomy institutions.

[Peri] The Palestinian street is a great and frightening unknown. Do you find a deep and eternal hatred for us there?

[Rothschild] There is hatred, but I would not term it eternal. It is a hatred which is not politically motivated, but is rather constituted of negative feelings toward our behavior, whether this behavior is justified or not. A son who sees his father under detention, or who has to undergo brutal searches and insults can never forget this—nothing will change this fact. I am not talking here about those wounded and killed.

[Peri] What about the slight to their honor?

[Rothschild] The insult done to their honor is one of the main factors contributing to their hatred. This hatred, however, is limited only to those affected, and does not mean that the Palestinians will not be able to coexist with us over the long term.

[Peri] What does coexistence with the Israelis mean for the Palestinians?

[Rothschild] It is a slogan for wanting to receive all the benefits Israel can give them without Israeli presence in the territories. It means working in Israel, trading with us, and enjoying Israeli freedom.

I believe that over the prolonged months of negotiations 'Arafat has learned about a Palestinian public he was unfamiliar with. This is a public which has learned a lot from us over the last 26 years. It is a demanding public which has learned to use the media. They used CNN against us, and now they are using it against 'Arafat. It is not the public to which 'Arafat was accustomed in Beirut, Amman, or Tunis, a public which was used to obey his every order.

[Peri] Do you hear them criticize 'Arafat?

[Rothschild] Now they criticize him openly, whereas once they dared to criticize him only secretly. The difference is that today they give vent to their criticism openly over the pages of AL-QUDS. They say that if 'Arafat believes he can establish the 23d dictatorship in the Middle East here, he is mistaken. It is not only that somebody is willing to write this down, there is also somebody who is willing to publish this criticism. [passage omitted]

[Peri] You sound very pessimistic.

[Rothschild] I am not pessimistic, I am concerned. If the agreement we achieved will not be implemented on the ground, we will have achieved nothing. Unfortunately, we can do very little to help implement this agreement. The chances of implementing it depend on how the Palestinians shoulder the responsibility, their ability to manage affairs and their leadership. I am rather worried about all of this, because I still do not see any signs that the Palestinian side is ready to assume this responsibility.

Iran Responsible for MIA's Despite Velayati Remark

TA2404112394 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 24 Apr 94 p A1

[Report by military correspondent Eytan Rabin]

[Text] Yesterday, at a news conference in Bucharest, Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati was asked by IDF Radio correspondent Udi Segal why Iran continues holding Navigator Ron Arad. The Iranian foreign minister replied: "I firmly deny that there are Israeli MIA's on Iranian territory."

This was the first time the Iranian foreign minister publicly answered an Israeli correspondent and reacted to the claim that Iran is holding Israeli MIA's or POW's. Commenting on Velayati's remark, an Israeli source said last night that, as far as Israel is concerned, Iran is responsible for the MIA's and POW's.

The source said that Velayati's remarks "do not relieve Iran of its responsibility for the Israeli MIA's and POW's. It may well be that none are held on Iranian soil, but we hold Iran responsible for the affair."

According to the Israeli source, Israel continues dealing with the issue of the MIA's and POW's on all levels, including a special effort in the international arena, in order to bring the affair to an end.

Peres: Iran Responsible for Arad

TA2504064294 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Excerpt] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres said yesterday that Israel holds Iran responsible for the fate of captive navigator Ron Arad. As recalled, in reply to a question posed by an IDF radio correspondent, the Iranian foreign minister denied that any Israeli prisoners are being held on Iranian soil. Iran is now officially denying that its foreign minister ever spoke to a Zionist correspondent. Our correspondent Eyal Eisenstein spoke with Foreign Minister Peres:

[Begin recording] [Eisenstein] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres was skeptical with regard to Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati's statements on the issue of the Israeli POW's and MIA's. Yesterday, Peres said that Israel still considers Iran responsible for the fate of captive navigator Ron Arad.

[Peres] Iran's word carries no particular weight. Iran has no problem with making up or denying stories, without any foundation. Therefore, regardless of this or that statement, we shall continue to regard Iran as the main party responsible for the fate of Ron Arad. [passage omitted] [end recording]

'Informal Business Ties' With Tunisia To Be Formed

TA2404062994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 24 Apr 94

[Text] Economy and Planning Minister Shim'on Shetrit met yesterday in Bucharest with Tunisian Economic Minister Mohamed Ghannouchi [title as heard]. In their meeting, the two men agreed that informal business ties should be established between Israel and Tunisia as an introductory step toward the tightening of trade and tourism relations between the two countries. Shetrit and Ghannouchi agreed that some of these ties should be conducted through a third country. This was reported by our correspondent Gid'on Kouts.

Four Iraqis Cross From Jordan Seeking Asylum

TA2304114694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 23 Apr 94

[Text] Four more Iraqi citizens last night entered Israel from across the Jordanian border, seeking political asylum in Israel. Our correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that they crossed the border fence near the Allenby Bridge, and were arrested by IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers. They were unarmed. Two days ago, two Iraqi citizens crossed the border from Jordan near Kefar Rupin.

Tzomet Central Committee Approves New Constitution

TA2504105194 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 25 Apr 94 p A5

[Report by Yerah Tal]

[Excerpt] Last night, the Tzomet Central Committee approved the new party constitution by a majority of 58 to 30. Only 90 of the 250 committee members attended the vote.

Sources in Tzomet said that the fact that the constitution, which was supported by Tzomet Chairman Refa'el Eytan, did not win a sweeping majority is a further indication that Eytan is losing his power in Tzomet.

According to the new constitution, the chairman may appoint party functionaries, and his only obligation is to report the appointment to the party council and management. It was also decided that the chairman will be the party's candidate for prime minister and will be authorized to select and appoint candidates for the posts of minister and deputy minister, needing only to present the list to the Central Committee without asking for its authorization. [passage omitted]

King, U.S. Secretary of State Meet in London

King Receives Christopher

JN2504191894 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Excerpt] His Majesty King Husayn today received at his place of residence in London U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. During the meeting, the two sides made a comprehensive review of all issues of common concern, especially the peace process in the region and the siege imposed on the Port of al-'Aqabah. The U.S. secretary expressed the United States' positive response to Jordan's proposals of having Lloyds Register—a civil and nonprofitmaking company—carry out inspections on the ground at the Port of al-'Aqabah instead of the military inspection of ships at sea.

The U.S. secretary briefed His Majesty King Husayn on the latest developments in the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations. He expressed his hope that a tangible result will be achieved in the next few days. Christopher also hoped that during his upcoming tour of the region's countries, the bilateral negotiations will resume on all tracks in Washington next month.

His Majesty King Husayn and the secretary expressed the need to achieve tangible progress in these negotiations in order to reach a comprehensive, just, and lasting solution to all aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The talks dealt with all aspects of bilateral relations and the general situation in the Middle East.

His Majesty King Husayn expressed his continuous concern over the suffering of the Iraqi people and the difficult circumstances they are facing. [passage omitted]

King: Blockade To End 'Very Soon'

JN2504190594 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1714 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] In an exclusive interview conducted by 'Adil Malik for Jordan Television, His Majesty King Husayn has made the following remarks:

[Begin recording] [Malik] Your Majesty King Husayn: You have accustomed Jordanians to being informed about developments that concern them. What do you have to say to your compatriots today, following this meeting with the U.S. secretary of state?

[Husayn] I believe that the meeting was fruitful and useful. The climate of the talks was cordial and frank. Concerning the issue that is the focus of attention, it is the issue of peace. He [U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher] is obviously on his way to the region to activate things in a positive direction. I have learned that they [the Americans] have the same concerns we have concerning the fact that, for various reasons, enthusiasm for peace has recently suffered some setbacks. The parties concerned also feel this. Progress on a certain pivotal track has been very heartening. This is what I have to say as far as the issue of peace is concerned. As for another issue that we addressed, it is the issue of al-'Aqabah. It concerns the treatment of Jordan in a manner that could no longer be accepted or condoned. They have accepted our view. It seems that the issue is about to be resolved appropriately and satisfactorily. We expect....

[Malik, interrupting] Can we expect a change in the method of inspections?

[Husayn] The blockade will be ended very soon. The ships that have been deployed there will be moved. A proper arrangement involving the use of a neutral party will be in place, something that we have proposed (?from the outset).

[Malik] Sir, one last word on the fate of the peace process. Have you seen any new horizons for addressing the problem at this point?

[Husayn] Sir, as far as I am concerned, the problem does not lie with the question of peace. For peace is undoubtedly a great objective. But, at the same time, one should contemplate the alternative should efforts fail, and should we fail to achieve anything. The peace I am speaking of is a durable, just, and comprehensive peace that future generations can accept. This is what we insist on and focus on. It seems to me that there are still great hopes for efforts to move in this direction.

[Malik] Thank you, sir.

[Husayn] Thank you, sir. [end recording]

King, Christopher Hold News Conference

JN2504200294 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1758 GMT 25 Apr 94

[News conference by King Husayn and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher with unidentified correspondents in London on 25 April—recorded, in English; passages in italics in Arabic]

[Text] [Husayn] Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to express before you once again joy at having the opportunity to meet a very dear and old friend [words indistinct] Christopher here. We've had some very, very fruitful, open, and frank discussions on a number of issues of mutual interest to us, but also to all of you. I'm very happy indeed to have had this chance. I'm sure you have questions that you wish to address to the secretary and myself, and we'll be more than happy to respond to them.

[Christopher] Good morning, or good afternoon, I guess it is by now. I did have the honor of meeting with King Husayn again here in his residence in London, and I have to say that we've had a very constructive discussion of a number of issues. We, of course, discussed the peace process and the importance of pushing for progress on all four of the tracks, looking toward and understanding the great importance of comprehensive peace. We talked about resumption on the four bilateral tracks in Washington D.C. rather soon after I complete this visit to the Middle East. We particularly agreed on the importance of moving forward to rapid implementation of the

Declaration of Principles between the Israelis and the Palestinians after they conclude their agreement which we hope will be in the very near future.

On a matter of importance, I informed his majesty that, subject to some fine tuning, the United States Government will support the establishment of a land-based regime for verifying enforcement of sanctions against Iraq. The inspections will be carried out by a private independent, not-for-profit company of international stature and integrity, Lloyds Register of the United Kingdom, which will operate at the port of al-'Aqabah. The United States is convinced that this new inspection regime will be as effective as the MIF [Multinational Interdiction Force], effective in guaranteeing that no Iraqi trade will transit al-'Aqabah other than transactions which have been specifically permitted by the United Nations. Indeed, we believe that in some respects land-based inspections will [word indistinct] an improvement in our ability to enforce sanctions against Iraq. And I want to emphasize that the king and I discussed these matters today, and the United States and Jordan and our MIF partners are all fully and definitely committed to the enforcement of the sanctions. After careful study, I'm glad to say we became convinced that this proposal for a new inspection regime not only takes into account in response to the legitimate concerns that his majesty has indicated to me on a prior occasion, but will also make it easier to sustain and enhance the sanctions against Iraq. The king and I have agreed that Jordan and the United States will cooperate closely together with the Sanctions Committee and other interested parties to effectuate and establish this new onshore enforcement regime to make it work efficiently and expeditiously. Thank you very much, and as the king said, we'll be glad to try to respond to questions that you have.

[Correspondent] Your Majesty, does this mean now, this new development, that you can participate fully in the Middle East peace process? And can you tell us a little bit more on how will this actually operate on shore?

[Husayn] Well, initially I believe it was a Jordanian suggestion that we have discussed with our friends over a long period of time to try to address the problems that we are facing and which caused us in Jordan tremendous damage not only in the material sense but also the feeling that Jordan was treated in a way that was different to any treatment of other neighbors of Iraq. So, the idea that is now adopted is one that we have looked at and we have contributed in terms of the recent past, and I am very happy indeed that we see eye-to-eye on this particular approach.

At the same time, I would like to make it very very clear, that we are, and have been, adhering to Security Council resolutions and implementing them to the best of our ability. And as the secretary has mentioned, we are very very deeply concerned with the suffering of the Iraqi people as a result of this whole situation that Iraq has faced over a number of years. And we hope that conditions will permit an end to this nightmare as far as the people are concerned before too long.

[Correspondent] Your Majesty, did you today agree on a date to resume talks with Israel in Washington as part of the four-track process?

[Husayn] [Words indistinct] secretary's visit to the region will determine that probably. But as far as we are concerned, no one has, we believe, contributed more to the cause of peace or has been committed more to that than we in Jordan. At least, we are equal with the best of the flock, [word indistint] ahead of them. And It's something that we say with pride and with a feeling that we have always realized our responsibilities towards future generations. So, the cause of peace is very very dear to us. But we have done our best so far and I think we've moved, helped move the process along through the various stages that have passed. Now, we will look and see what developments will occur. Our problem that we raised, I believe, is addressed now in a satisfactory manner; that is, that of al-'Aqabah and the continuing suffering that we've endured over a period of time there. So I hope that the secretary will meet with every success during his trip to the area. And as far as peace is concerned, it's very dear to us and it's an area where we will do whatever we can, whenever we can, to see a comprehensive peace in that region that will transform it and give future generations a chance to live as they desire.

[Correspondent] Your Majesty, would you like to see the easing of the naval blockade as the first step towards totally lifting the sanctions on Iraq?

[Husayn] Definitely, this is a part of it and I hope that we will see it end as a mechanism comes into place to provide all with a satisfactory solution to the problem.

[Correspondent] Mr. Christopher, are you aware of any secret talks between Israel and Iraq?

[Christopher] No. [mild laughter in audience]

[Correspondent] Can you tell us when this naval blockade of al-'Aqabah could be lifted, and why it wasn't lifted before?

[Christopher] Well, we're talking now about the Multinational Interception Force which had its purpose preventing violations of the sanctions regime. I spoke of some fine tuning, and by that I mean we do need to have some consultations with the other members of that force to find the best way to carry and to effect this on-shore regime. I think they'll be very prompt. I can't give you a definite date, but I think it will be in the very near future that we are able to shift over to the on-shore inspection regime. You asked why it was not done in the future [as heard] and I think the fact is that the enforcement of the sanctions is highly important. It was done efficiently and effectively by the Multinational Interception Force, but this, as it turned out, was having a very adverse effect here in Jordan, and so, we responded to the king's request to try to search for an alternative mechanism. We wanted to satisfy ourselves that the alternative mechanism could work. We have concluded that it will, and we are going to move to put it into effect as soon as possible. I think it's a, I believe it is common ground between the king and the United States that this will not resolve in any attenuation of the sanctions regime itself, but indeed as simply an alternative, and perhaps more effective way of carrying out the regime. The sanctions themselves can only be lifted, in the view of the United States, when there is full compliance by Iraq with the United Nations Security Council resolutions.

[Correspondent] Your Majesty, you recently made some comments about the status of Jerusalem in the final solution. Did the question come up at all and what is Jordan's stand on the final status of Jerusalem in an overall peace settlement?

[Husayn] I don't think we discussed the final status of Jerusalem today, but our friends are aware of it, and that it is clear in my mind that there are two facades to the problem; one which is political and demographic in terms of Security Council Resolution 242, in terms of the rights of the Palestinian brethren there, in the hope that Jerusalem will be the symbol and the essence of peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians. And the other is in regard to the holy places, and our hope, and our determination is to do anything we can to serve what we believe is the [words indistinct] that small area should be that important to all the followers of the three great religions, that sovereignty over those holy places should be to God only, and that we should encourage the ongoing dialogue between the followers of the three monotheistic religions. And I hope, eventually, that we will find a status that will make Jerusalem once more the essence and the symbol of peace between the followers of these three great religions.

[Correspondent] Your Majesty: Jordan has troops in Bosnia. Did you discuss the latest developments in Bosnia with the secretary? And what is the feeling, what is your own feeling about the situation of the Muslims now in Bosnia?

[Husayn] It is one of deep anxiety. And we do have troops there. And I believe we probably have the second largest contingent of UN forces after France there. And we will try our very very best to serve the cause of peace and justice for all, and alleviate the suffering of people there. I think it is a very, very dangerous, difficult moment. And it is a test, not only for the goodwill of people in the world, but for the United Nations and its future, and for the credibility of the UN, and the credibility of the world in terms of its ability to address such problems adequately and to arrive at solutions that are just and fair.

[Correspondent] Your Majesty: How soon do you expect to see a comprehensive peace for the Middle East?

[Husayn] I wish it were with me, we would probably progress much more rapidly. But, there are many other parties involved. However, I believe that what is important at this stage, and I am sure that the secretary feels the same way, is that the overwhelming majority of people, what I call the peace camp on either side of the divide, we have in the recent past seen a change. And there was so much enthusiasm for peace, and so much hope. It hasn't been dampened by the recent tragic events and by the slow pace of progress in attaining a just and comprehensive peace. I hope that the secretary's efforts, and the efforts of all concerned will see us really address problems seriously, and with total commitment and determination. And I can't give a timeframe. But, I hope it will be as soon as possible.

[Correspondent] Excuse me Your Majesty: Two more questions, please, ladies and gentlemen.

[Correspondent] [as heard] Why didn't the United States work hard to make United Nations resolutions work in Bosnia like it did with Iraq?

[Christopher] You mean where [words indistinct]?

[Correspondent] I said in Bosnia. Why did the United Nations' resolutions not work like they worked in Iraq?

[Christopher] First, let me say that his majesty and I did have a good discussion of, with respect to Bosnia today. We talked about the recent progress that has been made there in connection with Sarajevo. We talked about the federation that has been formed between the Croatians and the Muslims in Bosnia, both of those being positive steps. The United States is working very intensely to try to achieve an end to the killing there, and have a settlement that would bring some peace to that land. We are also trying very hard to contain the situation within Bosnia itself. No one would regard this as a simple problem. All would agree that it is extremely complex. The United States is devoting great energy to carrying out the United Nations resolutions, as well as to trying to seek peace there. You know the long list of things the United States has done in connection with this largest humanitarian contributor out of many other nations, the no-fly zone. The flights bring food in the longest airlift in history. Ten million meals have been dropped most recently, leading the way to a NATO coalition, which first established an ultimatum for Sarajevo, which brought some measure of normality to that city, and now leading the way to NATO resolution, which seems to be working this morning in Gorazde. The United States will continue to devote its efforts to achieve some more rational settlement of the situation in Bosnia.

[Correspondent] *Your Majesty, you threatened not to return to the peace negotiations if the siege on the port of al-'Aqabah is not lifted. Has there been any new development, particularly after your meeting?*

[Husayn] *[Words indistinct] a positive development in what was conveyed to me today by the U.S. media that this siege is about to be lifted on al-'Aqabah. They accepted what we suggested regarding finding another way to address the problem in a satisfactory manner.*

[Correspondent] *Will you return to the negotiating table with Israel soon?*

[Husayn] *I believe that we offered much, and perhaps more than others did, to serve the objective of establishing* *a just and lasting peace in the region. We are committed to doing the impossible to reach a just, honorable, lasting, and comprehensive peace in the region, which will return the rights to their owners, particularly the Palestinian rights on the Palestinian national soil, and which will also give the generations an opportunity to live under circumstances different from those under which we lived. In fact, our commitment has not changed. We do not know precisely what the coming phase will be in terms of the secretary of state's move in the region. We said clearly and frankly that we are suffering from a problem, which we have long been suffering from, with regard to the port of al-'Aqabah and that this problem should be addressed. It seems that this treatment is now* [sentence incomplete as heard]

[Correspondent] *What about the harassments made by the Israeli prime minister with regard to the Hamas issue? It seems that he is interfering in Jordan's internal affairs. There are clear harassments. What are your reactions to these harassments?*

[Husayn] *Sir, the reaction is simple. In fact, with regard to the whole issue, the reply would have been clearer if these statements were not made by the Israeli prime minister with the foreign minister attending. With much simplicity, we are against terrorism; we have always been against terrorism and we fought it and paid a dear price with the blood of our sons and kinsfolk in Jordan while standing against terrorism from any source whatsoever. With regard to the Palestinian dimension, we practically ['amaliyan] deal with the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian Arab people. We stressed this decision in Rabat in 1974. Israel is now negotiating with this organization and the Palestinian side regarding the Palestinian rights on the Palestinian national soil. We practically do not recognize any other organization and will not allow it to carry out its activity on Jordanian soil in a way that threatens the Palestinian arena with division. Since the beginning of the phase of working for peace and since the PLO embarked on its steps I have frequently said, cautioned, and appealed to the Palestinian brothers to be one hand and one heart in this phase. We do not seek division and fragmentation but the closure of ranks, and we only deal with the PLO.*

[Correspondent] *Your Majesty the King, are you satisfied with the level of coordination with the Arab parties in the peace talks? You always said that you wanted these talks to be based on [Resolution] 242. Is this resolution still valid when we see some Arab parties working alone, for example? Not all parties are actually coordinating, and this is what is surfacing.*

[Husayn] *Sir, naturally, I will continue to hope that coordination will be at the required level. Matters are only judged by their results. So far, I do not believe that coordination is at the level required by the situation and through addressing a cause with such a degree of accuracy and seriousness, not only at the level of the parties concerned but also with regard to the atmosphere we are experiencing as an Arab nation in this crisis. However, we hope that matters will improve.*

Al-Majali Cited on 'Positive Signals' on al-'Aqabah

JN2504145494 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Report by Randah Habib from Amman]

[Text] Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali has stressed that his country received positive signals concerning a solution in the near future to the siege clamped on the Port of al-'Aqabah. He noted that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher might convey to Jordan's Monarch King Husayn such a U.S. position during their meeting in London today.

At a news conference, al-Majali said that Washington is serious about reaching a solution to this issue, and that the United States has accepted Jordan's proposal to deploy observers from Lloyds Register at the Port of al-'Aqabah instead of inspecting ships at sea. However, he said that if the present situation continues, Jordan will adhere to its stand of suspending its participation in the peace talks. He noted that Syria supports the Jordanian stand on the siege on al-'Aqabah, and that a Syrian-Jordanian meeting will be held before the resumption of bilateral talks with Israel, which are scheduled to begin in early May.

Al-Majali on Citizenship, al-'Aqabah 'Siege'

JN2504181094 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1525 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Amman, 25 Apr (PETRA)—Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali has stated that there is no political dimension in the call of His Highness Prince Hasan, the regent, for reconsidering the valid procedures for the residence of West Bank citizens in the kingdom. He added that this procedural issue was aimed at facilitating measures for citizens arriving and departing across the bridges because of the growing pressure on state organs at the bridges. Thousands of citizens, he said, cross the bridges every day.

During his meeting with the representatives and correspondents of Arab and foreign news agencies and newspapers accredited in Jordan, Dr. al-Majali asserted that nothing decisive and final has been issued so far regarding the siege of al-'Aqabah.

The prime minister denied that there were U.S. conditions for lifting the siege on the Port of al-'Aqabah, noting that Jordan has announced that it will send a very low-level delegation to the multilateral negotiations to express its dissatisfaction with the contradiction between the objectives of the multilateral negotiations, which have economic and social aims in the region, and the maintenance of a siege or punitive measures on one of the parties. This, he said, will destabilize the national economy that should be improved as a result of these negotiations.

The prime minister appealed to the fraternal Arab countries to reschedule their political differences just as they reschedule their economic debts. He also said that the recent accelerating events in the region, particularly the

Hebron massacre and the situation in the Port of al-'Aqabah, have contributed to halting the peace process, pending positive signs on outstanding issues. He added that Jordan's decision to enter the negotiations had nothing to do with the siege of al-'Aqabah but was due to Jordan's firm strategy toward peace. Jordan, he added, was among the states that first carried the torch of peace in this region.

Following are the proceedings of the prime minister's meeting:

Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali has said that there is no political dimension in the call of His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the regent, for reconsidering valid procedures for the residence of West Bank citizens in the kingdom, adding that it is simply a procedural issue at the bridges and the kingdom's other border points. The continued pressure at the bridges makes it incumbent on the state organs to change and improve many of these routine procedures.

He added that are no procedures and instructions that can satisfy everybody and cover every case. Therefore, an issue requiring certain measures emerges from time to time and new developments have to be considered.

Speaking about what is new concerning the al-'Aqabah siege, the prime minister said that so far no decisive and final decision has been made on this issue. However, he noted, there is an inclination to remove this cloud and that the preparations for that are underway. Perhaps a statement on this issue will be made following His Majesty King Husayn's meeting with the U.S. secretary of state.

If the situation remains the same, then the Jordanian stand is clear. We have announced that our representation at the multilateral negotiations will be minimal as an expression of how we feel toward the contradiction between the objectives of the multilateral negotiations, which have economic and social aims in the region, and the maintenance of a siege or sanctions on one of the parties, which will destabilize the national economy that these negotiations seek to improve.

Speaking about the options Jordan presented as solutions to the al-'Aqabah siege, the prime minister said that Jordan proposed that a nonpolitical and nonprofit-making party carry out observation rather inspection operations at the Port of al-'Aqabah while Jordanian customs personnel inspect the containers which arrive on board the ships.

He added that the recommended party is Lloyd's Register, whose task will be confined to observation and inspection of shipping documents. It will then present reports to responsible parties on the implementation of resolutions which deal with sanctions on Iraq.

He said that Jordan made it very clear that it will not allow any foreign party whatsoever to encroach on Jordan's sovereignty over its own soil. Al-Majali said this in response to reports that Jordan had agreed to replace naval inspections by U.S.-led multinational forces with ground inspections.

He noted that the United States had made inquiries about parties to carry out inspection operations and that it presented a report to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who may brief His Majesty King Husayn on some details and recommendations of this report during their anticipated meeting later today.

He said that the U.S. side had almost accepted this Jordanian proposal and that the details concerning the action plan and the financing of this party are currently under discussion.

Al-Majali noted that Jordan had explained to the international quarters its stand that al-'Aqabah is Jordan's gate to the world and not to Iraq only. He added that if the alliance forces want to make sure that Jordanian goods are not being exported to Iraq, then inspection and observation should take place at the Jordanian-Iraqi borders.

Editorials View Developments in al-'Aqabah Conflict

U.S. Response to Demands 'Positive'

JN2604060794 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 26 Apr 94 pp 1, 18

[Editorial: "Husayn-Christopher Meeting is Crowned With Satisfactory Results"]

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn has convinced the U.S. Administration of the need to address the issue of the siege imposed on the Port of al-'Aqabah and to stop harassing the port-bound ships.

The U.S. Administration has responded to Jordan's call for another method of searching vessels, one that will not harm Jordan's economy and trade. The U.S. Administration's understanding of the Jordanian position on this issue was evident during His Majesty King Husayn's meeting with Christopher in London yesterday. The U.S. secretary, who will start a Middle East tour following his meeting with his majesty the king, emphasized that Washington is seriously considering Jordan's desire to see a change in the method of inspecting Iraqi trade via Jordan and to shift inspection from sea to land.

This is a positive development in the U.S. position on the siege of al-'Aqabah. This development denotes a U.S. desire to see Jordan resume its role in the peace process. However, as His Majesty King Husayn said, the resumption of Jordan's role and efforts in support of the peace process hinges upon the outcome of Christopher's Middle East tour and his meetings with the officials of the Arab cordon [al-tawq] states. Jordan, as his majesty stressed, is keen on the success of the process, which should lead to a just and comprehensive peace based on Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425 and the principle of trading land for peace.

If the U.S. secretary makes sufficient efforts during his Middle East tour to convince or force Israel to abide by the principle of withdrawal from all of the occupied Arab territories and on all fronts, the peace process may proceed at a reasonable pace and in a satisfactory manner, and negotiations on the four tracks will overcome the obstacles planted by Israel along their course. Otherwise, Israel and the U.S. Administration will be responsible for any failure in the peace process.

Response to Inspection Proposals Welcomed

JN2604061994 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 26 Apr 94 p 1, 20

[Editorial: "To Reverse a Wrong Course Is a Virtue]

[Text] In the wake of yesterday's meeting with His Majesty King Husayn, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher stressed that his country has responded to Jordan's proposals on the al-'Aqabah Port inspections. We can only welcome such a development, which Jordan has been seeking and struggling to achieve.

Understandably, America's reverse of its unjustified position on the al-'Aqabah Port is considered an abandonment of wrong course. Welcoming such a move, we hope to see pertinent measures on the ground as soon as possible, especially since the imposition of this iniquitous sea blockade has been targeting Jordan and its economy more than any other country.

Undoubtedly, the U.S. decision to give up such an erroneous course against Jordan must be attributed to His Majesty King Husayn's brave insistence that this blockade be lifted before Jordan resumes any active participation in any negotiations in the context of the Middle East peace process.

U.S. approval to stop the sea piracy measures that have been exercised against Jordan for over three years means that it is abandoning a course that blemished Jordan's position and image, despite the fact that Jordan has declared its commitment to international resolutions and played an undeniable part in boosting the peace process.

We welcome such a development in the U.S. position on Jordan. We view it as a reverse of a grave mistake that the United States has been committing against us without any adequate justification. At the same time, we firmly support his majesty the king who confidently led a courageous and aggressive diplomatic thrust that eventually convinced the United States to respond to our objective proposals in this regard.

U.S. 'Receptiveness' to Demands Noted

JN2604072394 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 26 Apr 94 p 19

[Editorial: "Siege Removal, Peace, Christopher Tour"]

[Text] The U.S. receptiveness toward Jordan's legitimate demand that the blockade of Jordan's only outlet to the sea be ended meets the requirements of mutual respect and Jordan's legitimate right that it be spared undue pressure to promote certain goals.

Now that Christopher has informed His Majesty King Husayn that measures are being taken toward lifting the siege of the Port of al-'Aqabah and acknowledged Jordan has incurred losses as a consequence, follow-through is needed to propel the peace process forward and to advance the cause of security and stability in a region plagued by turbulence and turmoil since the founding of the state of Israel.

On the eve of Secretary Christopher's Middle East tour, it is worth making this point: If we are to sell true peace to the peoples of the region, then promises of peace, stability, and prosperity need to be converted into physical realities based on justice and Israel's compliance with what it takes to bring peace to the region; namely, the UN resolutions granting the Palestinian people's right to repatriation and mandating the withdrawal from the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories.

The pessimism and frustration that has gripped the region since the negotiations got stuck on all tracks must be laid at Israel's doorstep. For, they are the result of the obstacles Israel has placed in the path of the efforts to promote a just settlement under which Palestinian and Arab rights are assured.

If the negotiations are to emerge from crisis and a regional explosion is to be averted, Israel's regimen of terror, aggression, and repression of innocents must end. It is hoped that Christopher's tour will set out to achieve these goals and that the removal of the blockade on the Port of al-'Aqabah will be followed by other steps. One of these would be to shift the pressure on the Arab parties involved in the negotiations to the party where it rightly belongs—Israel, the true enemy of an equitable peace and stability.

Lloyds To 'Monitor,' Not Inspect

JN2604063994 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 26 Apr 94 pp 1, 21

[Editorial: "U.S. Response to the Jordanian Proposals"]

[Text] During His Majesty King Husayn's meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in London yesterday, the U.S. secretary said that the United States has responded to the proposals presented by Jordan to lift the siege of al-'Aqabah. He added that the inspections will be carried out by a neutral civilian body in the Port of al-'Aqabah instead of by offshore military vessels.

The U.S. response to the Jordanian proposals came as a result of a solid Jordanian stand following Jordan's announcement on many occasions on its compliance with the UN resolutions. The inspection of 1,700 ships bound for al-'Aqabah has proven that these resolutions were not violated.

Jordan has also announced that the offshore inspections are useless because there are too many other gateways to Iraq and because no inspection is carried out at these gateways. Therefore, there is no point in continuing the siege of al-'Aqabah alone unless the siege has other objectives related to the Jordanian stand vis-a-vis the peace process and negotiations.

As the prime minister asserted in his meeting with the Arab and foreign journalists yesterday, Jordan rejects any encroachment on its sovereignty by any foreign side. The proposals presented by Jordan stipulate that a non-political and not-for-profit party should carry out monitoring work, not inspection, while Jordanian customs employees inspect the containers that arrive at the port on board al-'Aqabah-bound ships. The proposals also stipulate that the recommended party—Lloyds Register—is to monitor, check the documents of the cargo, and to report to those in charge of implementing the sanctions on Iraq.

The U.S. agreement on the Jordanian proposals will end a clear contradiction between the objectives of the peace process and the unjustified imposition of sanctions on Jordan, for which it has paid dearly from its national economy.

Ship Carrying Feed Turned Back by U.S. Inspectors

JN2604074594 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 26 Apr 94 p 24

[Excerpt] U.S. naval inspectors have turned back a ship bound for the Port of al-'Aqabah carrying a consignment of 3,943 tonnes of soya feed for a Jordanian merchant. The vessel had been intercepted at the Strait of Tiran.

The inspection team explained that the lower quarters of the vessel had proved inaccessible to them.

The ship had to return for refueling at the Port of Suez. [passage omitted]

Al-Majali Welcomes 'Positive' Statements by Israel

JN2604085894 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 26 Apr 94 pp 1, 5

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter Ayman al-Safadi]

[Text] Amman—Jordan on Monday [25 April] welcomed as a "positive step" Israeli statements indicating readiness for making territorial compromise and dismantling the settlements in the occupied Arab territories in return for peace with the Arabs.

"I believe what (Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin) said is positive...it is the first time he makes such a statement and it (means) an acceptance of the truth that peace cannot be achieved as long as the settlements exist in their current shape," Prime Minister 'Abd al-Salam al-Majali told reporters.

Restating Jordan's position that settlements are an obstacle to peace, Dr. al-Majali said the Hebron massacre was a major factor in "shaking the idea of building and keeping settlements."

Dr. al-Majali said Jordan was ready to hold the meetings of the Jordanian-Palestinian coordination committees, blaming the failure of these committees to meet on the Palestinian engagement with the autonomy talks in Egypt.

He said this engagement partly justifies the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) failure to hold the meetings of these committees but "does not justify it fully because a long time has passed (since the formation of committees)." He said, "our fear for the absence of coordination is that our brothers in the organisation do not have enough experience in certain issues and we are more experienced than them and could help them and avoid harm."

But coordination with Syria "is at its best," said Dr. al-Majali adding that Syria supports Jordan's demand for an end to the siege on al-'Aqabah and the two countries along with other Arab partners will meet to coordinate before the resumption of the bilateral peace talks.

He said the Hebron massacre and the siege on al-'Aqabah contributed to the halting of the peace talks until the emergence of positive signs about these issues.

Dr. al-Majali rejected accusations that his government lacked a strategy on the process or its media policy, saying Jordan was among the first countries to seek peace in the region.

Reiterating Jordan's commitment to a comprehensive peace in the Middle East, the prime minister said Jordan will be ready for discussing all issues related to the peace process when it resumes.

He said Jordan will take into consideration developments on other tracks of the negotiations which will lead to peace treaties in accordance with the Madrid formula.

Dr. al-Majali repeated Jordan's rejection of Israel's "illogical" demands to sign a peace treaty before resolving the issues on the agenda for the talks signed by the two countries in September last year.

He said the objective of the negotiations is to reach a peace treaty but only after all issues in the agenda have been resolved.

In reply to a question on the status of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, in Jordan, Dr. al-Majali reiterated that Jordan does not accept "any illegal grouping" and will only deal with the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people.

Dr. al-Majali said Jordanian relations with some Gulf Arab countries have improved but said "some issues" remain unresolved between the Kingdom and Saudi Arabia.

"Time will reveal it all and the day will come when the brothers will realise that we did not do them any wrong at all," the prime minister told foreign correspondents at the Prime Ministry.

Dr. al-Majali held the Jordanian media responsible for the failure of the reconciliation efforts among Arab states, adding that Jordan received some complaints from some Arab Gulf countries about reports carried by the country's unofficial media.

"The role of the press was not positive in improving relations," Dr. al-Majali said, expressing an opinion he has projected earlier.

Dr. al-Majali, who said the media "shoulders 95 per cent of the responsibility" for the tension in relations with the

Gulf, said Jordan had told countries which complained that the media in Jordan are free and "we have never guided (them)," adding that the Press and Publication Law bans the publishing of news that harm friendly countries and legal cases have been launched against those who violated the law.

Pointing out that the government cannot control the unofficial press, Dr. al-Majali said, "the role played by the official media towards Arab relations is positive and there was nothing in them that could be interpreted as offensive to our brothers in the Arab countries."

Responding to a question on whether Egypt was trying to undermine Jordan's role in the region, Dr. al-Majali said that Egypt and Jordan had strong relations and the two countries look into means of strengthening them.

The prime minister said Jordan played a mediation role in the Yemeni conflict upon the request of its leaders who trust the wisdom of His Majesty King Husayn. But he said there are differences in Yemen that might have become personal which makes the implementation of the reconciliation agreement signed in Amman difficult.

The prime minister said: "We believe in the Iraqi people, their freedom and (the need) to lift the injustice inflicted upon them."

The Iraqi people, he said, "are free in their choice of its leadership and we do not impose our opinion on them because we do not allow ourselves to interfere in the affairs of others."

Asked about the reported involvement of an Arab country in the assassination of Jordanian diplomat Na'ib al-Ma'ayitah in Beirut in January, Dr. al-Majali said the results of the investigation conducted by the Lebanese authorities did not name any country behind the assassination.

The prime minister said the two suspects arrested in the case admitted that their organisation, Abu-Nidal Group, assassinated Mr. Ma'ayitah because it "was not happy with Jordan's policy."

It was "a big plot; too many people were involved," said Dr. al-Majali, adding that the assassins had planned to kill the Jordanian ambassador in Beirut.

Cabinet Hears Report on Water Meetings Position

JN2304144394 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 23 Apr 94

[Text] The Council of Ministers held a session under Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali this morning. It listened to a report by the minister of state for foreign affairs on Jordan's participation in the meetings of the multilateral working group on water, which held its fifth meeting in Muscat in the Sultanate of Oman.

It is noteworthy that Jordan decided to reduce the number of its delegates participating in the meeting to only one, until an appropriate solution is found for the way ships heading for al-'Aqabah are searched.

At the end of the meetings, Jordan's delegate delivered a speech. He said he could not reject or support the decisions reached in the committee's meetings until he consulted with the Jordanian Government. This position postponed the meetings for a few hours because the committee's decisions are made unanimously.

In honor of the host state, the fraternal Sultanate of Oman, the Jordanian delegate decided to regard his speech as canceled, so acceptable decisions could be made unanimously. In a concluding speech, the meeting's head said he understood Jordan's position and stressed the desire of the committee's members to remove the reasons for the reduction in the Jordanian delegation, so it can resume its previous activity and efforts.

Deputy Says France Places Country on 'Terrorism' List

JN2604134994 Amman AKHIR KHABAR in Arabic 25-26 Apr 94 p 1

[Text] AKHIR KHABAR has learned that the French interior minister has placed Jordan on the list of states sponsoring terrorism in the world, imposed restrictions on the movement of Jordanian nationals in France, and forced them to obtain exit permits before leaving France. In a statement to AKHIR KHABAR, Deputy Muhammad Abu-'Alim, who recently returned from an official visit to the French capital, said that he, as well as the Arab delegations participating in the Arab-European parliamentary dialogue, were surprised at the official French stand vis-a-vis Jordan. He added that they discussed the matter with the French officials, particularly since we in Jordan are not aware of this matter.

Abu-'Alim said: The Jordanian Embassy in Paris is aware of this. I personally met with Mr. Bouchar [name as published] who is currently the head of the Middle East Political Desk at the French Foreign Ministry, He added that the French official admitted that Jordan was mistakenly placed on the terrorism list. The French official said: The French Government will discuss the matter.

AKHIR KHABAR has also learned that the [Jordanian] Government is currently holding contacts with the French officials in this regard and that it expects the situation to be addressed before declaring the official French stand which is known to French political figures.

The French foreign minister visited Israel three weeks ago and refused the meet the Jordanian deputies who visited Paris.

Buwayz on Peace Talks, Palestinian Refugees

NC2504135094 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 18 Apr 94 p 5

[Interview with Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz by correspondents Zuhayr Hawari and 'Imad Marmil; place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [AL-SAFIR] Lebanon has not participated in the multilateral peace negotiations during which fundamental issues are being discussed that affect it, such as refugees and water. Are you still insisting on not participating in the talks?

[Buwayz] Not only are we still insisting but we are also more convinced than ever before that it was premature to embark on multilateral negotiations before the bilateral negotiations made tangible, essential, and decisive progress. We are insisting that participation in them is a mistake. Lebanon was the first country that warned against joining the multilateral talks. I remember that I made this warning when I chaired the Arab League Council meeting in Cairo in 1990 before the Madrid conference. I said then that we are reading in the press and hearing from some sources that multilateral talks are being proposed on the issues of water, armaments, the environment, transportation, communications, etc. I also said: While firmly convinced that these are essential issues, that we cannot be forgiven if we ignore them, that these issues have to be discussed when peace comes, and that an agreement must be reached on them because they are common problems, we cannot embark on discussing these issues if they are proposed to us—and at that time they were not officially proposed—before we are certain that peace is coming and on the details of this peace.

Why? First, because I regarded the multilateral talks as complementary to peace and to the peace decision. How can we complement a decision that has not been made yet?

Second, I said that these multilateral talks are like someone who tries to furnish a house before it is built or the shape is known. How can we choose the furniture for a house that has not been built?

This is why I say that the multilateral talks involve complementary issues that presuppose the existence of peace. We must be certain that the peace decision has become inevitable and that its aspects and shape have become clear before we enter into multilateral talks. We have no reservations about the issues being discussed at the multilateral talks but about the mechanism. We even welcome international participation in them. But we have reservations about their timing. We say it openly—and time has proved that we are right—that the multilateral talks have not made progress because the bilateral ones have not made progress. Those who have been tempted to take part in these talks admitted to us later that they were tempted by the promises made from outside the multilateral talks framework. Some Arab countries have admitted to me later that they joined the multilateral talks not out of conviction but on the basis of foreign promises to improve their relations with a certain country. Where have the multilateral talks gone now? The question is how could the negotiator sitting at the multilateral talks table make progress when he knows that the principal negotiator involved in the bilateral talks is stalled?

[AL-SAFIR] It appears that the dead end is a dual one?

[Buwayz] In addition to what I have already said, the most important consideration for us is that the multilateral talks must be in the interest of everyone in the region. For Israel it is of an additional interest. How can we pay a price to Israel when the latter has not yet agreed to implement the Madrid agreement principles and the international resolutions that were supposedly used by the Madrid conference as a basis for shaping the implementation mechanism?

[AL-SAFIR] Israel alone is not responsible for the dead end in the talks but is jointly responsible for it with the United States, which is managing the negotiating process?

[Buwayz] Like in criminal law where there is a positive and a negative responsibility, I believe that Israel is responsible for not abiding by the Madrid agreement and for not seeking to implement the Madrid decisions. It is prevaricating on implementing what was decided on in that conference. It tried to prevaricate when it sought to gain six additional months during the U.S. elections and when it procrastinated with all the Arab countries as it was working to push the Palestinian negotiator into certain positions while refusing to make progress on the other tracks. Between the policy of isolating the other parties, the policy of the Israeli Governments' internal weakness, and the policy of wagering on the change in U.S. Administrations, Israel has squandered much of the years since the peace process started. I say that this is a positive responsibility, that is, it practiced this responsibility intentionally and negatively. That was a positive responsibility done to serve a negative objective.

Regarding U.S. responsibility as cosponsor of the conference, we did not enter the peace process believing Israel really wanted peace and would quickly embrace it. We did not enter an ambiguous peace process either; we entered a process with well-defined features, goals, mechanisms, and roles. The goals were clear and frank. They were represented by the principle of land for peace, the principle of the implementation of UN resolutions, and the principle of the restoration of lands and the Palestinian people's political rights. A major reason for our participation in the conference was our belief that the U.S. role would be an influential one. We believed that Israel on its own would not move toward peace. We took into consideration the U.S. and Soviet assurances. The Soviet Union still existed then. We particularly depended on the U.S. assurances, believing that the U.S. commitment to this conference would result in pressure being applied on Israel to move in the required direction.

I cannot say that the successive U.S. Administrations have fully played this role. I cannot say that the United States has played this role from the beginning, that is, the role of an honest broker or a driving force. I believe that the United States has so far sufficed itself with playing a role of a logistical nature or that of a technical broker. It has not undertaken dynamic and strong mediation as envisaged in the peace process. Hence, its responsibility is negative, the responsibility of someone who has not fulfilled his obligations.

[AL-SAFIR] Israel claims that the Lebanese delegation is not negotiating with it. At the same time, Rabin stresses that there is no full withdrawal from the Golan in return for a full peace. How can this vicious circle be broken?

[Buwayz] This question consists of two parts. Regarding the negotiations with the Lebanese delegation, what do they want the Lebanese delegation to negotiate? There are certain Lebanese principles. Lebanon clearly says that Israel must implement Resolution 425, which calls for Israel's withdrawal to the internationally recognized border, and for the Lebanese state to establish its authority. In return, Lebanon pledges to assume its responsibility as a state and to ensure that security and stability prevails in the area that the state will receive. We tell the Israelis that this resolution is independent of the Middle East conflict. Let them accept the principle of its implementation and we will then be ready to form a joint military commission that will adopt the executive steps, programs, and timetables. Afterwards, in solidarity with the other Arab states, we will move forward with the peace talks until a comprehensive and final peace is achieved.

We have proposed progress in two phases. The first phase is purely Lebanese and is through the implementation of Resolution 425. The second phase is on the regional level. What did Israel do? It linked the Lebanese dossier with the other dossiers, especially the Syrian dossier. First, as a precondition Israel demanded that the Lebanese state control the resistance when it knew that this was impossible. Israel knows that the resistance is the result and not the cause of the occupation. The result cannot disappear as long as the cause remains. Israel knows that the Lebanese Government cannot drop the principle of resistance as long as it does not have definite assurances that its territory will be restored. Therefore, Israel is imposing impossible conditions while we have pledged to establish peace and security when Israel withdraws from the south. Second, Israel links its withdrawal to the signing of a comprehensive peace treaty under which all Arab rights are supposed to be restored. Hence, it is Israel that is linking the problem of the south with the regional problem. This is not the first time it has done this. In the 17 May [1983] agreement, which was signed after one and a half years of talks, Israel linked the outcome of the talks with Syria's commitment to the security of the south. Therefore, if Israel is accusing us of linking our dossier to Syria's dossier, it is doing that itself. If it is accusing us of linking it to the regional problem, it is also doing that itself.

[AL-SAFIR] In the beginning you stated that Israel is seeking to deal unilaterally with the Arab states. Now you are saying that it is linking the Lebanese dossier with the Syrian dossier.

[Buwayz] In the Lebanese dossier, instead of accepting the spirit of Resolution 425 and acknowledging the need for the implementation of this resolution in return for security and stability and then moving on to the regional level, Israel is linking this subject with the regional topic. One of Israel's conditions for withdrawal is the signing of a comprehensive peace agreement.

[AL-SAFIR] The Madrid conference was launched on the basis of land for peace. The Lebanese translation of the conference is the implementation of Resolution 425 in return for what?

[Buwayz] Well, we have told Israel to please declare its readiness for complete withdrawal. This would justify forming a military committee, which would work out a timetable for a withdrawal and then we could proceed together toward a comprehensive peace. However, Israel is proposing forming a military committee with an as yet unidentified purpose. We have asked Israel about the purpose of a military committee. If the purpose is to maintain the prevailing truce, then we say that there is a truce committee, so why this new committee? If the goal is to maintain the current situation, we say that there are UN forces doing that. Let us do their job. However, if the purpose is really to reach a full withdrawal from south Lebanon, then let Israel declare this and there would be justification for forming a military committee.

[AL-SAFIR] We are currently in a dormant stage that may last for a long time. Can Lebanon tolerate such a situation?

[Buwayz] For us to say whether this situation will continue or not we have to pinpoint responsibility for it. It was very obvious in the latest round of talks, the 12th round, that Israel deliberately refused to make any progress for three reasons:

1. It wanted to frustrate all results of the Geneva summit between Presidents al-Asad and Clinton to negate any possibility of an Arab-U.S. agreement that might be imposed on it and to show that nothing positive can be done without taking the Israeli factor into account.

2. It believed that it could not make progress on a track as long as the Palestinian track had not run its course, so Israel deliberately prevaricated to foil this round in the hopes of reaching certain agreements with the Palestinians.

3. It used the pretext that the government's internal situation at the time did not allow it to make certain decisions and that it had to secure certain domestic alliances before making new decisions. Israel used these three reasons directly or tacitly to prevent any progress. So, who is responsible for the stagnation in the negotiations?

[AL-SAFIR] There is no doubt that Israel is responsible, but the Arab party has no other option than negotiations.

[Buwayz] I would not say that the Arab side has no other options, but that the Arab side is trying to give the peace process every chance. I would also like to maintain that the Arab side refuses to bear the responsibility for the failure of the peace process, should it fail. Therefore, despite the difficult negotiations and Israeli stalling, the Arab side wants to ensure all chances for these negotiations to succeed. Should the negotiations fail, the Arab side does not want to look negative before the world. If a party does not mind looking negative and bearing the moral and political responsibility for the peace process, let it be Israel. [passage omitted]

[AL-SAFIR] One of the issues that shows the extent of Arab solidarity is that of the Palestinian refugees in the Arab countries, which is being discussed at the multilateral talks. For example, Jordan, which you said will not sign, said that it will resort to international law and not Resolution 194, which provides for the return of refugees to their land. What about the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and how will you deal with this issue?

[Buwayz] When Jordan chooses a certain legal or any other framework to deal with the Palestinian refugee problem, it means the problem of Palestinians on its territory and not elsewhere. Regarding Lebanon, we believe that there can be no possible solution to the Palestinian refugee problem in the context of the multilateral negotiations outside the bilateral talks. Regarding the Palestinian presence in Lebanon, we are proceeding from the points outlined in our Constitution: We reject settling the Palestinians in Lebanon in any way, and all Lebanese concur on this issue. We believe that there is no one radical solution to the Palestinian refugee problem. Anyone who believes that there is one prompt solution is mistaken. I believe that solving this problem must follow four lines: First, recognizing the right to return and consolidating the UN resolution on the right to return. What do I mean by the right to return? Of course, Israel will not agree to the Palestinians returning to the territories that will remain under its authority. But what about Israel's stance on the return of Palestinians to the territories that will be regained—Gaza and Jericho—and to more areas that may be regained later? The right to return to the Palestinian territories that will be under Palestinian authority in the future must be entrenched, particularly those Palestinians who have connections there such as material, property, or relatives. I believe that if we work seriously to emphasize this principle, some 20 percent of Palestinian citizens in Lebanon could be assimilated there.

Second is the principle of the family reunion return. The world has the humanitarian responsibility to allow those who have family members anywhere in the world—whether it is Egypt, Syria, Jordan, the Gulf, Palestine, Canada, or the United States—to join their families, that is, family reunion by having the minority join the majority. If we can shape this idea and adopt it, it can solve 25 percent of the problems of the Palestinians in Lebanon.

Third, I believe that there are countries with many immigrants. There are countries that are large and rich but suffer from the weakness of their human resources and low populations. These countries have let in a number of expatriates. They include Australia, Canada, and possibly the United States. I believe that these countries that continue to accept a large number of immigrants should give priority to the Palestinians who want to settle in them.

And last, I believe that the Middle East region is also a very extensive area. Some of its areas have huge resources and need manpower and certain human resources. I also believe that some of these countries have the moral, political, and ethnic responsibility of tackling even the problem of the Palestinian refugees. How can we continue to import Asian laborers when we have Palestinians who cannot enter and work in these countries?

Hence, I believe that if we deal seriously with these four solutions, they can solve a major and radical part of Lebanon's problem with the Palestinian presence. While this presence might be normal, acceptable, and "easily digested" in other countries of immense size and huge population and where the absorption of 400,000 or 500,000 Palestinians will not affect them, this presence in Lebanon will have deep and fundamental consequences. First, Lebanon's geographic size is very small compared to its population. Second, the Lebanese area that can be inhabited or is fit for investment—if we take away the high mountains and deep valleys—remains very small. Third, everyone knows that the Lebanese structure is a very complicated one and any imbalance in it will have political social, economic, and security consequences. Fourth, we believe that the conditions of the Palestinians in the refugee camps in Lebanon radically differs from those in a number of countries where they have settled down, are working, and are enjoying health care and education. It is impossible to ask Lebanon at present, when it has emerged from war and is incapable of satisfying the social needs of the Lebanese, to take care of the Palestinians' needs, too.

[AL-SAFIR] But the state has banned the rebuilding of the camps from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency funds and not from Lebanon's funds. What exactly is going on? What is being planned for the camps?

[Buwayz] If this were allowed, you would have said that resettlement is already taking place. What is required here to keep the Palestinian issue alive and keep it the responsibility of everyone or to absorb and resolve it here in Lebanon? I believe it is impossible to reconcile these two notions. If you want to allow the Palestinians to build wherever they want and if you want them to be included in social security and to enjoy all the rights of Lebanese citizens, then I believe that you are moving, intentionally or unintentionally, toward bringing resettlement about.

[AL-SAFIR] Mr. Minister, it is clear that Israel will not allow the Palestinians back and is raising the issue of the Jews in Arab countries.

[Buwayz] I don't think that the problem lies with Israel only. I don't believe that there are Palestinians who want to live in the State of Israel. This issue is not under discussion in the first place. We are talking about the Palestinians' return to the territories that will be retrieved and placed under Palestinian authority.

[AL-SAFIR] Your words imply that Lebanon does not want to keep the Palestinians already here and will work to reduce their numbers because, as you just said, it cannot tolerate such a number.

[Buwayz] I am not saying that Lebanon cannot tolerate that number now because this implies that it could tolerate that in the past. I am saying that Lebanon has never tolerated such a number and cannot tolerate it. We do not accept or allow a solution to the Palestinian problem to be made at the expense of creating a Lebanese problem. We also do not want or accept the exchange of the Palestinian identity for another one, including a Lebanese identity.

[AL-SAFIR] But Lebanon has shouldered responsibility for some of the Palestinians and must continue to do so at least temporarily.

[Buwayz] Lebanon and other Arab countries have temporarily received a number of Palestinians until solutions are found. The solutions have not been forthcoming. Does this mean that Lebanon must shoulder the responsibility alone for these Palestinians? This is an international responsibility resulting from the creation of Israel at the expense of the Palestinians, and an Arab responsibility from the perspective of blood and brotherly ties. Accordingly, this subject concerns the host states.

[AL-SAFIR] In any case, we retain our viewpoint regarding what you are saying.

[Buwayz] What is the problem?

[AL-SAFIR] Matters might not be explained only on the basis of the options you have spoken about. There is a problem.

[Buwayz] You have convinced me that there is a problem. Has anybody said there is no problem? If this problem did not exist, you would not have asked me all these questions. I agree with you that there is a problem. You have asked me how it can be solved. I have given you the realistic and possible solutions for this problem.

[AL-SAFIR] Are the ideas that you have aired personal or part of arrangements being prepared for the region?

[Buwayz] They are a kind of evaluation of the approaches that we can adopt. We have discussed this topic with international and other quarters. These quarters are now discussing this topic.

[AL-SAFIR] Do these ideas apply to Syria, Jordan, and Egypt?

[Buwayz] No, this solution applies to Lebanon. Perhaps the Palestinians in Egypt are not facing a problem. Egypt, with a population of 60 million, might not have a problem in assimilating 500,000 Palestinians. Syria does not have a problem with large refugee camps. The Palestinians in Syria benefit from free medicine and education. They enjoy almost all rights, except political rights.

I have explained Lebanon's special character. It is a small country with a sensitive social structure.

[AL-SAFIR] If the Palestinians refuse to leave Lebanon, will they be forced to leave?

[Buwayz] The Palestinians have so far proved their adherence to their identity. I believe a large number of Palestinians want either to return to Palestine or to go to another country where the conditions for living and working are better. I believe the opening of these options does not conflict with the Palestinian people's rights to return, to family reunions, or to choose the country in which they want to live.

[AL-SAFIR] Is there a possibility of discussing other options for the Palestinians in Lebanon that will provide better conditions for them?

[Buwayz] Under no circumstances will Lebanon accept the naturalization of the Palestinians.

[AL-SAFIR] We did not mean naturalization.

[Buwayz] Lebanon may accept gradual solutions. The residence of some Palestinians might be organized in accordance with solutions that will require some time. However, there is a firm national principle. Lebanon cannot assimilate the Palestinians and melt them into the Lebanese identity.

Hizballah 'Reconsidering' Political Line

NC2304084694 Beirut AL-DIYAR in Arabic 12 Apr 94 p 6

[Article by Simon Abu-Fadil in the "AL-DIYAR's Horizons" column: "Amid Optimism Over the Success of Negotiations, Hizballah Prepares Itself by Reconsidering Its Political Line"]

[Text] Political circles close to American channels in Lebanon are optimistic that the negotiations, which stumble once in awhile, will eventually end the state of war between Israel and the Arab states. What enhances these circles' optimism is well known: That is the presence of a single world camp whose plans will not be blocked, not even by the closest allies, particularly Israel. The positions assumed recently by some Israeli officials, who accept withdrawal from Golan and the suspension of settlement building, support the beliefs of these circles, who understand the American policy to a certain extent.

If the course of negotiations leads to such results, how will Hizballah deal with this reality? Will it give up its resistance role or will it be the difficult figure in the equation?

Political sources close to Hizballah say that the party's leadership is well aware of what is happening in the region and that it reads events and developments carefully and thoroughly. Hence, the sources say, it will not let the party pay the price or be the victim of the settlement.

Therefore, the inner political line of Hizballah leadership has started to focus on how to cope with peace with Israel through political and social methods, particularly since the party believes that coping with normalization is its responsibility. The party is thus turning its battle with Israel from military resistance to fierce political resistance, for which all its energies and institutions have been mobilized. The party believes that peace with Israel is more dangerous than war, the sources add.

The same sources affirm that Hizballah leadership is totally aware that the regional settlement will not be halted by Iran, which is up to its ears in foreign debts exceeding $50 billions and which is in a political position similar to that of other Third World states as a result of domestic and surrounding political conditions.

Other sources note in this context that the Hizballah leadership has launched contacts with state officials with a view to expanding the ways to cope with the Israeli peace and its impact on Lebanese society. The features of the approaching stage in the region have become clear to the party's leadership. Thus, it has started to reconsider its military structure and to organize it and monitor it carefully to avoid any individual fault or emotional outburst leading to a clash with the Lebanese Army, which will not let any incident or violation occur in the future. The Hizballah leadership understands that the government's acknowledgement of the resistance's reality at present can never be allowed in the next stage, when the Lebanese Army takes charge of security for the south, both its land and people.

These sources add that the measures the Lebanese Army adopted recently have put all the parties involved, particularly Hizballah, face to face with the reality that once the army "takes action," it will not "leave" the land it set foot on. Moreover, the Army will not tolerate any disruption so long as its organs are capable of "reaching" all the parties to correct them. In this, the Army will pursue methods that safeguard the state's interests and will avoid claiming victims among the party that fails to understand that it does not bargain for the land it deploys on or share it with others. Any leniency in this is tantamount to going back to the stage in which the state collapsed.

This reading of reality might turn the party with all its energies toward coping with peace, the sources say. They affirm that the party leadership is aware of fears from clashes within the party or between it and other parties in al-Biqa' in the same way it is aware of the impact peace will have on the region.

Hizballah Reacts to Israeli 'Crackdown' Plan

PM2204103594 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 21 Apr 94 p2

[Unattributed report: "Hizballah: Israel's Terms Betray Its Anxiety About Effectiveness of the Resistance"]

[Text] Beirut—In a statement it issued yesterday, Hizballah reacted to the Israel call for a crackdown on the resistance in the south and in the occupied territories. It said that "their terms and demands calling for the disarmament of the resistance reveal the extent of the enemy's anxiety about the effectiveness of that resistance, its forces, and its ability to undermine the enemy's security and presence in the occupied territories. Furthermore, such terms reflect a clear Zionist line relying on U.S. political and military support."

It added that "these conditions give a very good idea of the attrition to which the enemy is subjected, resulting in policy confusion." It expressed fear that "the enemy might turn that problem around by exploiting some willingness to discuss these terms or respond to some of them, like what happened to the Hamas representatives in Jordan."

It "totally" rejected these terms, and it asked: "Do recent declarations by enemy leaders call for a strong and firm reaction or does not the matter deserve any bother by some people?" It warned against the "suspect trumpets trying to give the recent confrontations and the subsequent Zionist-Lahdist aggressions the label of internal disputes and to turn the matter toward sectarian sedition and conflict." It urged "these trumpets to stop these attempts, particularly as what they say does not indicate that they see the occupation and its agents as a threat to the homeland, the people, the territory, and sovereignty."

Iran Requests Information on Missing Diplomats

NC2504131094 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Excerpt] Iranian Ambassador in Lebanon Homayun 'Alizadeh conveyed a verbal message to Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz from the Iranian Government today. The message requests information about the fate of Iranian diplomats [who disappeared in 1982] at a Lebanese Forces checkpoint. [passage omitted]

Army Confiscates Weapons From Lebanese Forces Depot

NC2504143194 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1330 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Al-Sharq Radio, which is owned by Prime Minister al-Hariri and which transmits from Paris, reports that the Lebanese Army today confiscated weapons and shells from a Lebanese Forces warehouse in al-Munsif village in the coastal area of Jubayl.

Agreement Reached To Cancel Labor Demonstration

NC2604053794 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 26 Apr 94

[Text] The intensive contacts held last night to cancel the labor demonstration scheduled for today, 26 April, produced positive results. An agreement was reached between the government and the Trade Union Federation.

Israeli Shelling, Resistance Operation Reported

NC2504122894 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Excerpts] The Israeli occupation troops stationed on the 'Alman and al-Shumariyah hills shelled the al-Litani River basin with artillery this morning. The nearby forests and valleys also came under bursts of machine-gun fire. At dawn today, the occupation troops fired several shells at Mimis, the al-Dahr hills, and the outskirts of (Mazra'at 'Ayn Bashshur). Several shells were also fired at Maydun and Birkat Jabbur in Western al-Biqa'. At 0700 this morning, three vehicles from the Lahd [South Lebanese Army] militias strafed areas on the al-Hasbani-Zymmarayya combat line for approximately 90 minutes.

At 0830, the occupation troops reopened the Zummarayya crossing gate, which they closed on Friday. A heavy traffic flow made up of civilian cars entered the liberated areas. [passage omitted]

The Islamic Resistance issued a statement today saying that to avenge the martyrs of a massacre in 'Aramta, one of its groups detonated an explosive device against an occupation patrol on a search campaign along the Kafr Huna-Jazzin road. One M-113 armored personnel carrier was destroyed and those inside either killed or wounded. Ambulances were seen rushing to the scene of the incident to evacuate the dead and wounded.

Al-Shar' Urges U.S. To 'Shoulder Its Responsibility'

NC2604082894 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0725 GMT 26 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 26 Apr (MENA)—Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' has stated that his country's position on peace is clear: implementation of the Security Council resolutions, full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan, and a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Al-Shar' told AL-'ALAM AL-YAWM that Syria will not concede one inch of Golan territory and will accept no security arrangements at the expense of Syria's national security or pan-Arab security.

He said Syria will determine its position on resuming the peace negotiations in Washington in light of the results of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's upcoming tour of the region.

The Syrian foreign minister called on the United States to shoulder its responsibility as a sponsor of the peace process. He urged the United States to make the right decision to safeguard the peace process and preserve U.S. credibility in the region.

Al-Shar' warned that if Israel fails to reconsider its position toward the peace process as a whole and to make the right decision to put this process back on track in accordance with the Madrid formula, then things will keep getting worse.

Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Visits

Makes Statement

JN2504141294 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets and the delegation accompanying him arrived in Damascus at noon today on a three-day official visit to Syria. He was received at Damascus International Airport by Dr. Salim Yasin, deputy prime minister for economic affairs; Dr. Muhammad al-'Imadi, minister of economy and foreign trade; several Foreign Ministry officials; Aleksandr Zotov, the Russian ambassador in Damascus; and the Embassy staff.

In a statement to the SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY, SANA, correspondent, Soskovets expressed his happiness over his visit to Syria, and said: My visit to Syria is linked to President Yeltsin's decision to continue and promote economic and political relations with Syria. He added: Our country has long-standing relations with Syria, and now that it has become an independent and sovereign state, we want to promote and expand previous relations and cooperation between the two countries.

Official Talks Begin

JN2504183594 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Excerpts] The Syrian side led by Dr. Salim Yasin, deputy prime minister for economic affairs, and the Russian side led by Oleg Soskovets, first deputy prime minister of the Russian Federation, began official talks at the Prime Ministry this evening. [passage omitted]

At the beginning of the meeting, Dr. Yasin welcomed Soskovets and his accompanying delegation and wished them a happy stay in Syria. He also stressed the profound friendly relations that have long linked the two countries. He then referred to the strong ties, which have developed in all areas, as well as the positive results they have produced and will continue to produce. He also pointed to the fact that both sides recognize that they have joint interests and seek to activate, expand, and diversify these ties. He also stressed the need to exert every effort and embark on every cooperative effort to reap the fruits within this framework.

Soskovets then spoke, expressing his happiness over the warm reception accorded him and his delegation. He said: This visit has been planned for a long time, and we sought to make it successful and fruitful in the field of bilateral cooperation. He then referred to the political and economic developments in Russia over the past period, as well as the great changes it has seen. The two sides then reviewed several issues of common interest in various areas, as well as bilateral relations and ways of promoting them in the interest of both countries.

At the end of the session, both sides agreed to resume the meetings tomorrow morning at the level of bilateral and specialized committees.

Syria's Military Needs To Be Discussed

PM2604131294 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 26 Apr 94 p 4

[Report by Salwa al-Ustuwani: "Russian Delegation in Damascus To Discuss Syria's Debts and Military Needs"]

[Text] Damascus—A Russian delegation headed by Oleg Soskovets, first deputy prime minister of the Russian Federation, arrived in Damascus the day before yesterday on a three-day official visit, during which talks will be held with senior political and military officials. The head of the delegation will deliver a message to President Hafiz al-Asad from Russian President Boris Yeltsin concerning developments in the Middle East, the peace process, the Russian efforts made in this connection, and bilateral relations. According to Russian sources, the Russian delegation is expected to discuss the debts question and Syria's needs, that is, spare parts and weapons.

The delegation will also visit a number of industrial installations and participate in opening the electrical "Tishrin Complex" in which Russia participates.

Syrian-Russian committees will meet to solve the problem of the military debts Syria owes to the Russian Federation, as the heir of the former Soviet Union. The debt problems will be solved in the two countries' joint interests. The debts are estimated at about $1.5 billion.

Syria had demanded that Russia fulfill its defense needs requested from the former Soviet Union under the friendship and cooperation agreement signed between the two countries in 1980.

The Russian delegation will also hold talks with Syrian Defense Ministry General Mustafa Talal on the Middle East crisis, the peace process, and Russia's view on how to advance this process, especially the Russian proposal to convene a "Madrid-2" conference.

Al-Asad Receives Visiting Afghan Official

JN2404175494 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 24 Apr 94

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received (Ayatollah Mohammad Asef Mohseni), member of the leadership council in Afghanistan [title as heard], at 1130 today. The Afghan official was accompanied by (Abdallah Mohseni), the Afghan charge d'affaires in Damascus.

Talks dealt with the situation in Afghanistan as well as developments in the Middle East.

Assembly Speaker Receives Libyan Islamic Delegation

JN2304203694 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1815 GMT 23 Apr 94

[Text] Damascus—People's Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah this evening received the delegation of the Islamic al-Da'wah Society in Libya led by Salim al-Makhadari. The meeting was attended by Humayyid Abu-Bakr Jallud, head of the Libyan External Relations Bureau in Damascus.

Talks during the meeting dealt with the situation and the suffering of the fraternal Libyan people as a result of the siege imposed on them, as well as solidarity with them to end this suffering.

The talks also dealt with the importance of Arab solidarity and the need for it under the current conditions.

Cancellation of UAE Curricula on Israel Criticized

JN2304174694 Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 11 Apr 94 pp 1, 11

[Unattributed "News and Analysis" feature: "Canceling Books in the United Arab Emirates Discussing Israeli Repression!"]

[Text] In a report from the United Arab Emirates [UAE] yesterday morning, London radio said the French Government canceled educational books in the French school in the UAE because they point to both Israeli repression in the occupied Arab territories and the Palestinian people's resistance of occupation. The press report claimed this measure was taken in agreement with the UAE authorities as part of fighting anti-Semitism!

The report, in itself, was brief. It, however, has serious implications. Everyone is aware of the French Government's current shift in favor of Israel, which reached the extent of concluding military and nuclear cooperation deals with it. This recalls the cooperation of the Guy Moliere [name as transliterated] government in the fifties before and after the futile Suez aggression. However, the French Government's cancellation, under the Zionist lobby's influence, of curricula in an Arab country on the pretext that it is anti-Semitic to discuss Israeli repression is regarded as extreme deception and collusion. It also reveals strong hostility to Arab hopes and aspirations as well as a readiness to cooperate with Israel as much as possible.

The Western press in general, including the French press, constantly discusses both Israeli repression and the subjection of Palestinians to disgraceful ordeals. We, however, have heard no official in the French Government viewing the Western reporters' articles and reports as anti-Semitic. Are not Arabs, the victims of Israeli occupation, entitled to raise their voices in denunciation and to urge the international community to assume its responsibilities? Do not both the failure to brief students on facts and publicity for Israel constitute absolute hostility to Arabs and their cause?

The French Government's conduct is amazing because it has apparently bargained the international community's principles and the values of justice for blind bias toward Israel, thus relinquishing the friendship of 200 million Arabs in favor of concealing Israeli crimes and implementing Israel's schemes.

What draws our attention is the fact that this measure totally conflicts with the recent decisions by the UAE Government with regard to tightening the boycott of Israel. This measure also contradicts the UAE's official policy condemning Israeli occupation and urging Israeli withdrawal and recognition of the Palestinian people's legitimate rights. The brothers in the UAE are aware of Israel's intransigence and aggression, knowing that the blood shed in the al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre has not yet dried!

The French Government's submission to Zionist blackmail should not mean that Paris is in a position to determine the UAE's policy toward Israel, especially since the UAE is not in need of France as much as France is in need of Arab oil. After all, Arab dignity remains above all considerations.

Afghanistan

National Islamic Front's Gailani Discusses Struggle

PM2604101694 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 25 Apr 94 p 4

[Interview with Sayyed Ahmad Gailani, leader of the National Islamic Front, by Salih Qallab in Islamabad; date not given]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Qallab] You say that the current struggle between Rabbani and Hekmatyar is attributable to the fact that each party is seeking to monopolize power. Is that the reason, and are there no ideological and political dimensions to this conflict?

[Gailani] Actually the main reason for this war is the power struggle. The Hezb-e Eslami led by Hekmatyar says that it wants a democratic government based on direct free elections, and that it is opposed to the regime of President Borhanoddin Rabbani, because the latter is seeking to monopolize power for himself, his party, and allies by military force.

For our part, we wanted a democratic system based on free elections and the establishment of a democratic parliament whose task is to elect the head of state. But regrettably, the idea of referring to influential people, announced by Rabbani initially, began to be stripped of its content, hence illegal, and undemocratic practices began to take place. This is why we refused to recognize this reality or to participate in the shura council which was formed by unsound means.

What we are seeking is to hold elections under the supervision of the United Nations and the Islamic Conference Organization, in order to elect a legal council that really represents the Afghan people. [passage omitted]

[Qallab] Rabbani says he is prepared to hold a dialogue with Hekmatyar or any other faction but cannot hold a dialogue with Abdol Rashid Dostam and Babrak Karmal, who is now in Mazar-e Sharif, because they represent a communist front. What is your opinion?

[Gailani] We are against communism, and we have fought it. But there is a unanimous decision to accept General Abdol Rashid Dostam among mojahedin ranks and to consider him a mojahed, as he rebelled against the communist regime. It is wrong now to say that he is a communist and thus no dialogue cannot be held with him.

[Qallab] But Dostam is allied with Babrak Karmal and the other leaders of the communist regime.

[Gailani] That is what Rabbani says, but it is absolutely untrue. [passage omitted]

[Qallab] If Rabbani's term ends without achieving a solution acceptable to most parties, a vacuum will occur and the country will be plunged into chaos and destruction. Do you have any alternatives?

[Gailani] We want to hold general elections on the basis of which to form a new legislative council and new government before the end of Rabbani's term.

[Qallab] These are your aspirations, but the reality on the ground is different. There are numerous armies and states.

[Gailani] All these armies could be merged into one national army.

[Qallab] Do you not believe that a disagreement would emerge over the allocation of posts?

[Gailani] No, they would not disagree at all, especially if a neutral government is elected. I point out here that Rabbani has expressed willingness to comply if a neutral government is elected. [passage omitted]

[Qallab] Do you agree with the view that some Islamic and Arab states do not want an Islamic state in Afghanistan for fear that such a state could become a seat of world tension in the future?

[Gailani] No, I do not agree with that view. I say that we want a moderate government, willing to coexist with neighboring states and all world states.

[Qallab] But Rabbani, to whom you are opposed now, is the most moderate person, compared with Hekmatyar.

[Gailani] The two are from the same school; there is no difference between them at all.

[Qallab] The Arab region, especially Egypt and Algeria, has suffered from the "Afghan Arabs" phenomenon. Which factions support them?

[Gailani] There are "Afghan Arabs" and there are organizations offering them camps and support. There are also Arab states guiding them against other Arab states. But we as Afghans reject that and want a moderate government that cooperates with all.

[Qallab] We heard some people say that the solution in Afghanistan lies in the return of the monarchy and King Zahir Shah. What is your opinion?

[Gailani] I respect King Zahir Shah. But I want any decision to be made by the Afghan people, whether with regard to the return of the monarchy or anything else. [passage omitted]

Hezb-e Eslami Reportedly Seeking Russian Arms

LD2504204594 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] On 10 April a delegation of Golboddin's party, led by [word indistinct] Arghandiwal, head of the party's finances, visited Moscow. [Words indistinct] in an article with the headline: War Equipments for Hekmatyar, wrote that the purpose of the visit, which was [words indistinct] of the Russian Foreign Ministry, was ostensibly about the return of seven Soviet prisoners of war who are with the armed groups of Golboddin. However, the real goal of the delegation was talks about the purchase of more weapons and ammunition from Russia.

It is reported that this week a group of Afghan Mojahedin has issued a statement, a section of which says: Russian military aid to antistate forces inflames the fire of fighting which has been ongoing since the new year. As Golboddin and General Dostum have started armed clashes to seize power in Afghanistan, a large number of people are of the opinion that the arms and ammunition that Golboddin buys from Russia do not stay in Afghanistan, but are exported to other parts of the world.

Foreign Ministry Issues Statement on Bosnia

LD2504200794 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Statement issued by Afghan Foreign Ministry on 25 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful:

The savage attacks of the Serbs started against the Muslim and meek people of Bosnia in the aftermath of the fall of the communist state of Yugoslavia and the establishment of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. These crimes, which entailed much loss of life and property and destruction and damage, have no parallel in the contemporary history of the world. The recent ruthless aggression in Gorazde has particularly aroused waves of hatred in people around the world.

Despite the fact that recent savage Serb aggression against the defenseless Muslims of Bosnia has been condemned by the Security Council, and some resolutions have been passed in connection with the cessation of Serb aggression, unfortunately no practical steps or effective measures have been taken. The [word indistinct] attitude of the Security Council in these issues emboldens the Serbs, who carelessly trample on these resolutions and continue their crimes. On the other hand, the Security Council still insists on the arms embargo on Bosnia and deprives the oppressed people of this country of their natural right—i.e., the right of self-defense—whereas Muslims of the world resolutely demand the lifting of the arms embargo on the Muslims of Bosnia.

Pursuing the basic lines of its foreign policy, the Islamic State of Afghanistan condemns any aggression against the Muslims in the world, especially against the Muslim people of Bosnia, and resolutely campaigns against it. As a long-standing member of the United Nations, Afghanistan once again strongly demands and supports the urgent and vigorous implementation of Security Council resolutions against the Serbs. As an active member of the ICO [Islamic Conference Organization], Afghanistan considers the role of this organization, in close and direct cooperation with the Security Council, valuable. Afghanistan hopes that by taking a united stance at the General Assembly special session, which is going to be held in the near future on Bosnian problems, this organization of Islamic countries, in active and joint participation with the United Nations, will attain such resolutions as to end this painful historic catastrophe and ensure peace in the afflicted country of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Bangladesh

Opposition Demands New Elections; Strike Enforced

BK2604062194 Hong Kong AFP in English 0542 GMT 26 Apr 94

[Text] Dhaka, April 26 (AFP)—A dawn-to-dusk strike called by Bangladesh's two main opposition parties demanding general elections under a neutral government crippled the capital city Tuesday [26 April].

Shops, schools, businesses and most offices shut down as activists from Sheikh Hasina Wajed's opposition Awami League party fanned out to enforce the strike, officials and witnesses said.

Police stepped up patrols and guarded the office of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party. There was no report of violence in the city so far.

The Awami League and the Jatiya Party of deposed Bangladesh president Hussain Muhammad Ershad called the strike to press the government to allow the staging of the next elections under a neutral caretaker government.

The league, however, has exempted the port city of Chittagong and southern district of Bhola from the general strike.

League MP [member of parliament], Tofael Ahmed, said the opposition was "preparing a common structure" for a caretaker government for supervising free and fair polls. "We will present it soon before the nation," he added.

The league, Jatiya Party and the rightwing Jamaat-e-Islami have reportedly presented bills to parliament seeking constitutional provisions for such a government.

Zia's administration has termed the opposition's demand as unconstitutional.

Zia was elected in 1991 in polls supervised by a caretaker government, but the opposition charged her with rigging the ballot.

Political sources said opposition parties were likely to unveil their plan for a caretaker administration later this month, and that they were discussing whether to boycott parliament's upcoming session scheduled to begin May 4.

Zia has previously criticised the opposition-led protests saying they hampered her government's development efforts.

Wajed said earlier this week that the Awami League will not sponsor strikes if the opposition was allowed to air its views on state-run television and radio stations.

League officials said Tuesday's strike was withdrawn from Chittagong and Cox's Bazar sea resort districts for a local annual fair. It has been put off in Bhola because Zia was scheduled to open an power grid there.

Indian Army Chief Arrives in Dhaka on Goodwill Visit

BK2404155894 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1430 GMT 24 Apr 94

[Text] The chief of staff of the Indian Armed Forces, General B.C. Joshi, arrived in Dhaka this afternoon on a six-day goodwill visit to Bangladesh. He is accompanied by his wife and a five-member delegation. Army Chief Lieutenant General Mohammed Nuruddin Khan, his wife, and senior Army officials received the guests at Zia international airport. K. Raghunath, Indian high commissioner to Bangladesh, was also present at the airport on the occasion.

Later, the Army chief of India paid his respects to the martyrs of the liberation war by placing floral wreaths on the Eternal Flame at the Dhaka cantonment.

India

Minister Confirms 'No Change' in Stand on NPT

BK2504135494 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] The government today made it clear that there is no change in its stand on the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT]. The parliamentary affairs minister, Mr. V.C. Shukla, told the Lok Sabha that India's policy is consistent that the treaty should be universal and nondiscriminatory. He was responding when several opposition leaders demanded that the government should make its position clear in view of the reported U.S. pressure for convening a regional conference on the issue. Raising the matter during zero hour, Mr. Chandrajit Yadav, Janata Dal, said the government should not agree to anything which will stop the research and development work for peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Beijing Seen Likely To Recognize Sikkim's Merger

BK2504085094 Delhi THE PIONEER in English 22 Apr 94 p 8

[Editorial: "China's Goodwill Gesture"]

[Text] The Chinese ambassador, Mr Cheng Ruisheng's statement, that Beijing is soon likely to officially recognise Sikkim's merger with India, is further good tidings for New Delhi and indicates that India can now look forward to the dividends of last year's agreement which marked a departure from past hostility between the two countries. Ever since Indira Gandhi's decision to make the "Protectorate" of Sikkim a State of the Republic in 1975, Beijing has steadfastly questioned the legality of the annexation. More than the technicality of the Himalayan kingdom's merger with India and whether or not a sovereign nation had been subjugated, Beijing was bothered by the disappearance of a buffer between India and China. After all, Sikkim had been the gateway to Tibet and its merger with India meant pushing the Indian frontier that much forward. Indeed, Chinese unhappiness with the turn of the events was reflected in Beijing's refusal to acknowledge Sikkim as a part of the Indian Union, a view which has been repeatedly expressed over the years.

It was Rajiv Gandhi's visit to China that led to a softening in Beijing's stand on Sikkim insofar as any official mention of the protectorate's merger with India was concerned. It is possible that the Chinese political leadership remained unhappy with the merger, but it refrained from striking public postures on the issue. Two factors have since contributed to the removal of doubts in Beijing about India's motives behind granting Sikkim statehood: First, the Prime Minister's visit to China last year which led to the Sino- Indian agreement on maintaining peace and tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control; and, second, China's interest in forging a regional front to prevent the U.S. from meddling in Asian affairs. Both the factors have contributed towards an upswing in Sino-Indian relations to the detriment of America's hegemonistic designs in the region, an added spinoff being the weakening of the Pakistan-China axis.

True, Beijing's official recognition of Sikkim's merger will not necessarily mean the removal of all irritants in Sino-Indian relations; neither should it be seen as indicative of a smooth road to solving the vexatious border dispute. At the same time, the benefits of narrowing down differences in other areas by stepping around what is apparently an intractable problem cannot be overemphasised. Some problems will continue to plague Sino-Indian relations and both New Delhi and Beijing will have to learn to cope with them if a lasting relation is to be forged between the two Asian giants. For instance, Beijing will have to stop doubting New Delhi's official position on Tibet—that it is an autonomous zone of China—and accept the inevitability of pluralism in a democratic society. By cavilling at views on Tibet's future expressed by individuals at seminars and rallies, like it did recently, Beijing will be running the risk of setting the clock back. A better option would be to hasten the reopening of the silk route which once connected two civilisations.

Tibetan Youths Arrested Following Clashes

BK2504141394 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] In Himachal Pradesh, the situation in the Dharamsala town of Kangra District is peaceful. The town witnessed violent clashes following a stabbing incident on Saturday in which one person was killed and 15 injured. The state home secretary, Mr. S.N. Verma, told our Simla correspondent that the Tibetan youths believed to be involved in the incident have been arrested. Additional police reinforcements have been rushed to Dharamsala. The chief minister, Mr. Vir Bhadra Singh, has appealed to the people to exercise restraint and maintain communal amity.

Conference Condemns Pakistan's Role in Kashmir

BK2404130094 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 24 Apr 94

[Text] The All India Urdu Editors and Intellectuals Conference has strongly condemned Pakistan's support to terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. In a resolution in New Delhi today, the conference said while fighting militancy in the valley, it should be ensured that the lives of innocent people are protected. It suggested the government to send a delegation of Urdu editors to Kashmir to assess the situation there. The conference also stressed the need to review all TADA [Terrorism and Disruptive Activities Act] cases and demanded the release of innocent persons.

Addressing the conference the railway minister, C. K. Jaffar Shariff, said that efforts should be made to enlist people's support in restoring normalcy in Kashmir. The tourism and civil aviation minister, Mr. Ghulam Nabi Azad, warned Pakistan against meddling in India's internal affairs. He said Pakistani misadventures are only creating more problems for minorities rather than serving any purpose.

Talbott's Visit to Region Reviewed

BK2304141594 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 11 Apr 94 p 1

[Report by unidentified correspondent]

[Text] New Delhi, April 10—Keen as they appeared to be to get Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao to visit Washington, the U.S. side, in the course of Mr. Strobe Talbott's talks here, sought to convince India that the strategic significance of getting Pakistan to cap verifiably its fissile material production would be far greater than a marginal increase in the latter's conventional arms strength.

One aspect of the proposed trade-off, entailing supply of 38 F-16 aircraft, what Mr. Talbott sought to highlight was that the exercise, if successful, would amount to Islamabad "delinking" its nuclear programme from India's. Consequently, New Delhi's security concerns, which extend beyond Islamabad, even the Indian subcontinent, would stand acknowledged with the China factor also being taken care of.

The Indian interlocutors weren't obviously impressed by the American logic. It was conveyed in very clear terms to Mr. Talbott and also reportedly to Mr. Robert Einhorn, Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs of the State Department, that the induction of the deep-penetration jets would affect the balance of forces adversely against India in the region, forcing it to take steps in line with the changed situation.

Mr. Einhorn has been engaged in Indo-U.S. bilateral discussions on disarmament and international security since 1992. His role in the recently concluded negotiations, which Mr. Talbott preferred to categorise as consultations, was much deeper than that of Ms. Robin Raphel, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State in charge of South Asia. On the sidelines of the talks at the political level, Mr. Einhorn is understood to have had meetings covering the nuts and bolts of the F-16 issue and its security implications for India.

The future contours of Washington's new policy of pursuing the nuclear issue separately with New Delhi and Islamabad would depend on the extent to which the Benazir Bhutto regime is willing to play ball. Unless Pakistan accepts the deal, the move would remain a non-starter. It's because of the Kashmir issue that South-Asia is perceived as a potential nuclear flash-point. In recent months, Pakistan has sought to link the two, the message being that the nuclear imbroglio cannot be resolved ahead of the Kashmir question for the need for a deterrent against India was felt due to the situation in the Valley.

In November last year, Ms. Raphel, in the course of her visit to Islamabad, had described the linkage drawn by Pakistan between Kashmir and its nuclear endeavour as a "natural line of thought." From accounts available of the latest Pak-U.S. bilateral exchange, it can safely be deduced that Washington's thinking has since changed. "The issue of non-proliferation is so important," Mr. Talbott is reported to have told his Pakistani audience "... that it needs to be discussed very much in its own terms."

Against this backdrop, Ms. Raphel, as President Clinton's pointsperson in South Asia, may have problems selling the intended package despite her reputation of being a friend of Pakistan. The rosy side (for India) of the proposed deal, if that, indeed, is the case, also hasn't been lost on the Pak foreign office. It has already spoken about the need to evolve an "agreed and equitable approach" in the U.S. linkage between the delivery of F-16 aircraft and the verifiable nuclear cap.

The message emanating from Islamabad is, therefore, unmistakable: the India factor cannot be ignored in Washington's bilateral dealings having a bearing on Pakistan's nuclear option. Said a spokesman of the Pak Foreign Office following talks with Mr. Talbott: "We have now informed the U.S. of our willingness to consider any ideas that might prompt a balance of obligation by India, on the one hand and by Pakistan on the other, although these country-specific obligations could be different in substance."

As pointed out by the U.S. official the process is going to be complicated and time-consuming, requiring a lot of work through "quiet" diplomatic channels. However, Ms. Bhutto does not appear to be in a position to accept the quid pro quo, especially not if Army Chief Gen. Abdul Waheed has returned unimpressed from Washington. According to Pakistani Press reports, he was to reach Islamabad before Mr. Talbott and his teammates.

Essentially, it's the Pak army which has to weigh the advantages of acquiring the 38 F-16s and some other "toys" against the major nuclear concession being demanded of them by the U.S.. As of now, only the Americans have some assessment of Gen. Waheed's thinking which, for evident reasons, Mr. Talbott refused to share at his Press conference in New Delhi, terming as "confidential" the record dialogue held in Washington.

Talking of confidential conversations, one may mention that not much also is known about what transpired at Mr. Talbott's one-to-one chat with Mr. Rao before leaving for Islamabad. Originally planned for Thursday last, the meeting had to be rescheduled for the next morning.

Privately, Mr. Talbott is understood to have confirmed to the Indian officials the components of the arms package offered to Pakistan. Besides the F-16s, the offer includes three P-3 Orion anti-submarine warplanes, 15 T-37 trainer aircraft and military-to- military cooperation and training for Pakistani army officers at U.S. war colleges.

It's against this background that the Foreign Office is exercising caution and care while working out the details of Mr. Rao's visit to Washington. The basic objective is to avoid any embarrassment to the Premier in terms of the timing of the supplies to Islamabad—if Pakistan accepts the deal, that is. At his Press conference here, Mr. Talbott was categorical that the gifts offered bilaterally would be delivered "if and only if Pakistan accepts a verifiable cap on its fissile material production."

Rao Meets With Sri Lankan Foreign Minister

BK2204162494 Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English 1509 GMT 22 Apr 94

["Spokesman's statement"]

[Text] New Delhi, 22 Apr—The foreign minister of Sri Lanka, Shri A.C.S. Hameed called on the prime minister in the forenoon today. The foreign minister gave the prime minister an account of the current internal situation in Sri Lanka and the various government initiatives in this regard.

He referred to different aspects of Indo-Sri Lanka economic and commercial relations, and hoped that these would be further strengthened. Mr. Hameed also briefed the prime minister on the Sri Lankan side's perception of their discussions underway in the Joint Commission meetings, mentioning that these were proceeding very well. The prime minister shared the hope that India-Sri Lanka economic and commercial relations would be further strengthened.

In the context of very satisfactory bilateral relations that we have had with Sri Lanka, the prime minister mentioned that India would like to build up its relations with Sri Lanka in every sphere. The prime minister expressed the hope that efficient arrangements could once again be put in place for Sri Lankan pilgrims to visit ancient Buddhist shrines in India.

Preferential Tariff for Sri Lanka To Be Restored

BK2404094594 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 24 Apr 94

[Text] India intends to restore preferential tariff margin on Sri Lankan clothes. The two-day meeting of the Indo-Sri Lankan Joint Commission held in New Delhi was told that this will be done as early as possible. An External Affairs Ministry press release said that both the countries decided to hold intergovernmental meetings on expansion of bilateral trade, as also the Sri Lankan request for increased market access for some of its products. Sri Lanka appreciated India's decision to extend a new line of credit to implement infrastructural development projects in that country. The two countries agreed in principle to collaborate in setting up an institute of technology and management in Sri Lanka.

Talks With Belgian Team Outlined

BK2204154994 Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English 1448 GMT 22 Apr 94

[India-Belgium "Joint Press Note"]

[Text] New Delhi, 22 Apr—Delegation level talks were held between India and Belgium on 18-19 April, 1994 to establish active cooperation between the two countries to curb illegal immigration and facilitate readmission of Indian illegals. The talks were held in a cordial and purposeful manner. Both sides agreed to a set of arrangements for expediting and streamlining the existing procedures in this regard. The Belgian delegation was led by H.E. [His Excellency] Mr. D. De Winter, ambassador for immigration policy and the Indian delegation by Mr. Deb Mukherji, additional secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs. During their stay the Belgian delegation called on the minister of state for external affairs, Shri R.L. Bhatia; the foreign secretary Mr. K. Srinivasan and the home secretary Mr. N.N. Vohra. The Belgian team also visited Punjab.

Commission Recommends Action Against Border Troops

BK2204151094 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 22 Apr 94

[Text] The government has accepted all the recommendations of the National Human Rights Commission regarding the Bijbiara firing incident in Jammu and Kashmir, in which 31 persons were killed on the 22d of October last. The commission's recommendations included continuing of disciplinary proceedings and prosecution of 14 BSF [Border Security Force] personnel involved in the incident, payment of interim compensation to the victims, and a thorough review of deployment of BSF units in civilian areas.

In its compliance report, the government informed the commission that BSF authorities have been instructed to complete the record of evidence, proceedings against the personnel. In addition, the investigation by the local police has been completed and steps are being taken to file a charge-sheet in a civil court. Regarding compensation, the state government has disbursed ex-gratia relief of 100,000 rupees each to the next of kin of the 31 civilians who were killed in the incident.

New Congress-I Government in Gujarat Sworn In

BK2204143694 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 22 Apr 94

[Text] In Gujarat, a 39-member Congress-I ministry led by Mr. Chhabildas Mehta was sworn in this evening at Gandhinagar. The governor, Dr. Saroop Singh, administered the oath of office and secrecy to the ministers.

Our Ahmedabad correspondent reports that for the first time the state has two deputy chief ministers. They are Mr. C.D. Patel and Mr. Narhari Amin. There are 22 cabinet ministers and 17 ministers of state. There are altogether 12 new faces, including four of cabinet rank. The new ministry has all the members of the outgoing cabinet. Portfolios will be announced later.

Punjab Akali Dal-Badal Suspends Political Activities

BK2204160394 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 22 Apr 94

[Text] The five-member presidium of the Akali Dal-Badal in Punjab has announced suspension of the party's political activities for an indefinite period.

Addressing a news conference at Jullundur today, the members of the presidium said that under the existing circumstances, it is not possible to carry on the political activities of the party. As already reported, the party president, Mr. Prakash Singh Badal, resigned yesterday and set up the five-member presidium to run the party's affairs.

Foreign Investment Projects Signed

BK2304103594 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1630 GMT 22 Apr 94

[Text] Sixty-four projects with foreign investments of over $415 million were cleared during the five-day Investmart which concluded in New Delhi today. In addition, specific interests were shown in over 100 other projects. Giving details of the investments, the secretary, industrial development, Mr. Surender Singh, told newsmen that the largest investment of $152 million was being made in the food processing sector followed by $142 million in metallurgy and $85 million dollars in the chemicals sector. While Italy led with the highest investment of $91 million, France signed the maximum number of 25 projects with Indian companies. Thirty two countries were represented at the Investmart which was organized jointly by the Industry Ministry and UNIDO [United Nations Industrial Development Organization]. Mr. Singh said that the government will be following up all the proposals for which letters of intent have been signed.

Foreign Exchange Reserves Estimated at $14.50 Billion

BK2304103794 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 23 Apr 94

[Text] The government has prepaid $1.13 billion as part of the loan drawn from the International Monetary Fund. A statement of the Reserve Bank of India issued in Bombay yesterday said with this payment the level of the country's foreign exchange reserves stood at $14.50 billion. It may be recalled that the finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, during his budget speech had committed to prepay a part of the IMF loan in view of comfortable foreign exchange reserves position.

Iran

Irish Defense Minister Holds Talks With Officials

Expansion of Economic Ties Discussed

LD2304194794 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 23 Apr 94

[Text] Ways of expanding economic ties between Ireland and the Islamic Republic of Iran were discussed in a meeting between Ireland's marine affairs minister and the minister of construction jihad in Tehran today. In the meeting, joint investment by the two countries in the fields of hunting and fishing; marine life breeding; the export of Iranian caviar to Ireland; livestock and forestry; and the exchange of knowledge were discussed.

Delegation Visits Fishery Facilities

LD2404211394 Tehran IRNA in English 2042 GMT 24 Apr 94

[Text] Bandar Anzali (Gilan), April 24, (IRNA)—The Irish minister of defence and marine affairs, David Andrews, and his delegation visited the fishery facilities at this Iranian port on the Caspian Sea.

The visit by the Irish official has been made upon the invitation of the Ministry of Construction Jihad.

The Iranian and Irish delegations exchanged views on fishing and related activities and cooperation.

After meeting with governor general of Gilan, Ali Akbar Tahaei, the Irish official visited Martyr Beheshti fish culturing workshops, Langar Dam, and Zibakenar which is a spot for fishing caviar.

President Receives Irish Minister

LD2504110194 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani today received David Andrews, Irish minister for defense and marine. In this meeting, the Irish minister for defense and marine conveyed the respects of his country's president and prime minister to the Iranian Government and people. He reported good progress in his talks with officials of the Ministry of Construction Jihad on the expansion of economic and trade relations between the two countries. He called for the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the two countries on the practical expansion of cooperation between Iran and Ireland.

In turn, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani welcomed the expansion of relations with Ireland, and he expressed the hope that greater exchanges of political and economic delegations between the two countries will lead to an increase in future cooperation.

Nateq-Nuri, Velayati Meet Minister

LD2504142294 Tehran IRNA in English 1315 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Tehran, April 25, IRNA—Visiting Irish Minister of Defence and Marine Affairs David Andrews here

Monday [25 April] expressed his country's readiness for promotion of scientific and economic cooperation with Iran particularly in fishery industry. Meeting with Majlis Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri, Andrews invited the speaker, on behalf of his Irish counterpart to pay an official visit to Dublin soon.

Andrews said both countries had successful cooperation in fields of fishing and manufacturing fishing equipment, hoping that Iran could use Ireland's technical expertise by despatching students at different educational levels to Ireland.

Nateq-Nuri in return said Iran was prepared to exchange expertise with Ireland in forestry, fishery, jetty and ship construction industry. He also expressed hope that he could visit Ireland at a proper time.

As for massacre of Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina Nateq-Nuri denounced the dual approach of the U.N. Security Council to the plight of Bosnian Muslims and once again called for lifting of arms embargo against Bosnia.

Commenting on Gaza-Jericho compromise deal, the speaker called it an unjust agreement seeking to stabilize the aggressors in the occupied lands.

Meanwhile Andrews discussed issues of mutual interest with Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati today and called for further expansion of Tehran-Dublin ties in all domains.

Velayati in return referring to the ample grounds for Tehran-Dublin cooperation welcomed promotion of bilateral relations.

Turkmen Vice President Arrives, Welcomed by Velayati

LD2504100694 Tehran IRNA in English 0944 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Tehran, April 25, IRNA—Turkmen Vice-President Boris Shikhmuradov arrived here this morning and was welcomed by Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati. He is carrying a message from Turkmen President Saparmurad Niyazov for his Iranian counterpart Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

Upon arrival at Mehrabad Airport, Shikhmuradov told IRNA that the objective of his trip was to discuss different issues, including matters of mutual interest, with high-ranking Iranian officials. He added that following the visit of the two presidents, mutual ties have been expanded and fundamental political and economic changes have been made in bilateral relations.

Shikhmuradov noted that another objective of his visit here was to make preparations for Niyazov's forthcoming visit to Iran.

Meanwhile, the Turkmen official and Velayati discussed the passing of Turkmenistan's gas pipelines to Europe through Iran. The two sides also studied implementation of agreements reached between the two countries during Niyazov's last trip to Iran.

Received by Hashemi-Rafsanjani

LD2504104894 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Turkmenistan's Vice President Shikhmuradov, who arrived in Tehran today, was received by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani and presented the latter with a written message from Turkmenistan's President Mr. Niyazov.

In the meeting, the president expressed satisfaction over the rate of expansion in friendly relations between Iran and Turkmenistan. He said the connection of the two countries' railways is of great significance for the increase of trade and economic exchanges as well as cargo transit between the countries of the European region and China.

Referring to plans to build a pipeline for the transfer of Turkmenistan's gas to Turkey through Iran, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani announced that the Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to participate in the speedy implementation of the plan.

According to the Central News Unit, for his part the Turkmenistan vice president reported on the agreements reached between the two countries and called for the ever increasing expansion of bilateral relations on the regional and international levels and cooperation in the field of gas transfer.

Referring to the Afghanistan problem, he expressed support for Iran's humanitarian policy in solving the existing difficulties in that country.

Western Policies in Bosnia Criticized at Seminar

LD2504174094 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] On the second day of a two-day seminar held to study polices of global arrogance in Bosnia and Muslim countries, Mr. Rowhani, the first deputy speaker of the Islamic Majles, in a speech referring to the political games played by Europe and the United States during recent developments in Bosnia, said: Thanks to the plots hatched by these countries, Russia was dragged into the arena, and in fact they played a political trick on Russia.

He added: On the whole the West believes that the Serbs should not only remain but should not be weakened either. And the Muslims should remain in the region too, but as a weak and scattered group that has to depend on daily assistance from Europe and the United States in all fields.

Rowhani described cooperation among Islamic countries as very significant for the future of the region's Muslims. He went on: The Islamic Republic of Iran, in accordance with instructions of the esteemed leader and on the basis of its Islamic and revolutionary obligation, is determined to provide every assistance required and will continue its aid more than ever before.

In conclusion, the participants issued a resolution asking all governments of the Islamic world, and particularly the Islamic Republic of Iran, to demonstrate the power of Islam once again by imposing sanctions against those who support the Serbs overtly and covertly. Also in this resolution the participants at the seminar announced readiness for any cooperation—including military, medical, and cultural cooperation—so as to safeguard the entity of the Islamic land of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Rowhani on Volunteers for Bosnia

LD2604095094 Tehran IRNA in English 0928 GMT 26 Apr 94

[Text] Tehran, April 26, IRNA—Majlis Vice-Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Hasan Rowhani said here Monday [25 April] that 10,000 Iranian volunteer forces are presently awaiting the U.N. approval for being dispatched to Bosnia-Herzegovina. Speaking at the two-day seminar on policies of the world arrogance in Bosnia-Herzegovina and other Islamic states, he remarked that despite Iran's readiness, the Iranian forces had not yet been allowed to be dispatched to that region.

The vice-speaker said that the west was using Russia as an excuse to withhold help to Muslims adding that the west was now pretending that it was Russia which, as a member of the Security Council, would veto decisions of other members made in favor of the Muslims.

He further said that if the U.S., Britain and France had not shown the green light to Russia, the latter would not have been in a position to stand against western powers.

Stressing that over 200,000 Bosnian Muslims were ready to struggle and sacrifice their lives, Rowhani concluded by saying that although the U.N. has confirmed that Bosnian Muslims are under Serbian aggressions, it has so far failed to provide them with defensive means.

Red Crescent Chairman Comments on Aid to Bosnia

LD2404103394 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 24 Apr 94

[Excerpts] The Islamic Republic of Iran's [IRI] Red Crescent Society will soon dispatch relief aid comprising foodstuff, clothing and other requirements to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The chairman of the IRI's Red Crescent Society, Mr. Seifollah Vahid Dastjerdi, today participated in an exclusive interview with our correspondent announcing the readiness of the society to collect donations for Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina. [passage omitted]

The chairman of the Red Crescent Society rounded up relief aid dispatched by the Red Crescent to Bosnia and said:

[Begin recording] [Dastjerdi] We have so far sent around 500 tonnes of foodstuff. We gave more than $100,000 in cash to their welfare organization and other people who work in that respect. The society also bought around 500 million rials worth of clothing and distributed them at camps set up around Sarajevo and other places in Bosnia.

[Correspondent] The Red Crescent has also treated Bosnian Muslims, what can you tell us on that?

[Dastjerdi] I should mention that we have not carried out any treatment on the spot. We received some patients and handicapped persons from there. They were treated by the Red Crescent [in Iran]. [passage omitted] We again announce our preparedness to receive patients and particularly handicapped.

[Correspondent] Thank you very much. [end recording]

Anniversary of U.S. 'Attack' Marked in Tabas

LD2504171194 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] On the anniversary of the U.S. direct military attack on the Tabas desert, the people of Tabas staged a rally to honor the divine victory of our country's people against the American aggressors. During this rally the people declared support for the suffering Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

IRGC Issues Statement

LD2404165594 Tehran IRNA in English 1639 GMT 24 Apr 94

[Text] Tehran, April 24, (IRNA)—Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) issuing a statement here today on the eve of the 14th anniversary of the aborted U.S. military offensive, recalling the memorable failure of American technology at Tabas, as "divine assistance".

The IRGC denouncing Washington's domineering policies, said the operation planned with "savage" precision and carried on 25 April 1980, miserably floundered in the deserts around Tabas (over 600 kms southeast of Tehran) in Khorasan Province, burning beyond recognition the aggressors and their aircraft.

It was a miracle for which Iran will always remain thankful to the almighty.

The statement also condemned Washington's tacit support for Serb aggressors and their unabated "brutal" attacks on the defenceless Bosnian Muslims.

Daily Views Objectives of Christopher's Saudi Visit

LD2604092194 Tehran IRNA in English 0858 GMT 26 Apr 94

[Text] Tehran, April 26, IRNA—A morning daily here Tuesday [26 April] commented on the establishment of peace in the Middle East and said that real and lasting peace is only possible through full and sincere cooperation of the regional countries free of any foreign influence and interference. Referring to the visit to Saudi Arabia of the U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, 'TEHRAN TIMES' said the visit has two objectives.

The first, said the paper, is to speed up the process of signing the Gaza-Jericho peace accord despite popular Palestinian opposition, and the second is to justify the illegal presence of the U.S. in the Persian Gulf and push the sale of U.S.-made arms to members of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (PGCC).

U.S. policy in the Middle East is to legitimize the presence of the Zionist entity in the region at any cost, said the paper noting that America must realize that even the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) has reached the conclusion that no peace will be achieved unless 'all Palestinians' unanimously accept the terms.

Velayati Leaves for Islamic Conference Talks in New York

LD2604075794 Tehran IRNA in English 0608 GMT 26 Apr 94

[Text] Tehran, April 26, IRNA—Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati left here this morning for New York where he will take part in the ministerial meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) contact group on Bosnia-Herzegovina. The contact group is to meet Wednesday at the United Nations headquarters upon Iran's proposal.

The foreign ministers of the OIC contact group will review the crisis in Bosnia-Herzegovina to explore ways to support the Bosnian Muslims. Malaysia, Pakistan, Senegal, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Tunisia, and Iran will take part in the meeting.

UK Arms Sales to Persian Gulf States Assessed

LD2504190994 Tehran IRNA in English 1751 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] London, Apr. 25, IRNA—After securing land and air arms deals with Persian Gulf states that are due to go on until the next century, the UK is now focusing on maritime defense equipment sales based again on invented fears of a so-called Iranian threat.

According to Jane's sentinel editor, Paul Beaver, international submarine suppliers are rushing to exploit the fears. For example, he points out Britain's offering to rent to littoral states the first of four new upholder-class submarines decommissioned by the defense ministry.

The sale pitch is apparently orchestrated around the false perception in the West of Iran's naval defense capability following the delivery to Iran of two Russian kilo-class conventional submarines last year.

To give the drive more credibility, Western navies are said to have fitted their warships in the region with torpedo decoy equipment. The old adage about 50 percent of hydrocarbons used by industrial nations passing through the Hormuz Strait is also exploited to the hilt.

The switch in emphasis to naval defense follows Britain's much-trumpeted arms sales in the Persian Gulf, which climaxed the biggest-ever "al-Yamamah deal" to Saudi Arabia and which has made the UK the world's second biggest arms exporter after the U.S.

The British proposal to rent submarines was said by Beaver to include an experienced crew as a way of outbidding the French and Americans, who are also seeking to reap the benefits of the built-up feeling of maritime insecurity in the region.

In a special report for this week's Middle East Economic Digest, Beaver quoted numerous Western defense companies bidding for contracts to supply Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE with a variety of submarines.

Although budgets are tight in the Persian Gulf due to low oil prices, Beaver believed that there was little doubt that the need for security of oil platforms will ensure funding is found. He suggested that the first significant anti-submarine defence and surveillance systems could be expected in the Persian Gulf later this year.

Reza'i on Number of Iranian Pilgrims for Hajj

LD2504143094 Tehran IRNA in English 1405 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Tehran, April 25, IRNA—Head of the Hajj and Pilgrimage Organization Hoseyn Reza'i on Monday did not confirm a BBC report that Saudi Arabia has agreed to the dispatch of 115,000 Iranians to Mecca for this year's hajj pilgrimage.

Head of the organization, Mohammad Hoseyn Reza'i told IRNA here Monday that Iran has not yet received a formal agreement from the Riyadh government to the effect.

The Iranian official added that despite having little time Iran is ready to send at least 115,000 pilgrims to Saudi Arabia under an agreement signed by the Iranian and Saudi foreign ministers in Oman in 1990. Riyadh has cut Iran's quota to 61,000.

Security Forces Arrest Students at Tehran Sit-In

PM2204145094 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 22 Apr 94 p 4

[Unattributed report: "Students Arrested in Iran"]

[Text] London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Iranian universities have witnessed a number of sit-ins and protests staged by students over the past two days. Security forces have arrested a number of students accused of organizing the unrest.

Hundreds of students from Tehran University began a sit-in at the Faculty of Economics in northern Amirabad Street the day before yesterday. The sit-in continued until yesterday morning. A statement issued by the Iranian opposition movement "Mojahedin-e Khalq" said that "the mullahs' repressive forces have arrested a number of students in the belief that they are the organizers of the sit-in."

Women Allowed To Be Advisers at Courts

LD2404104694 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 24 Apr 94

[Excerpt] In today's open session of the Islamic Consultative Majles, the bill on reforming the conditions of choosing judges of the Ministry of Justice was approved. According to our correspondent, the bill provides for women who are eligible for appointment as judges of the Ministry of Justice and who have a judicial background to be employed as advisers at the administrative court of justice, the special civil courts, the public prosecutor's office, the investigations department, the office of legal studies, the legislative office of the Ministry of Justice [as heard], the office for the supervision of minors, the legal office, and other offices with judicial positions. [passage omitted]

Larijani Comments on Satellite Broadcasting

LD2604104994 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 26 Apr 94

[Text] The second festival of radio and television programs produced by Voice and Vision centers has opened in the town of Ziba-Kenar in Rasht Province in the presence of Mr. 'Ali Larijani, the head of the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In the festival, which will last three days, 39 selected news programs, 31 television programs, 27 music and song programs, 20 radio programs, and 65 other productions relating to graphics, photography, and posters will be assessed.

At the festival's opening ceremony, Mr. Larijani delivered a speech in which he said: Holding this kind of festival leads to the improvement of the cultural standards of our Voice and Vision colleagues in two respects—the assessment and appraisal of the year's cultural work and the exchange of experiences.

The head of the Voice and Vision referred to the means by which the enemies of Islam carry out their cultural onslaught and to the expansion of satellite broadcasting. He added: Today, the expansion and increased activity of satellite broadcasting has become a serious problem for Europeans, because it will bring about the destruction of their cultural identities. He went on to say: We are not opposed to the positive dimensions of satellite broadcasting; we must also strive toward improving the quantity and quality of our programs while adhering to our Islamic criteria.

Pakistan

Opposition Legislators Tender Resignations

BK2504154294 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, opposition leader in the National Assembly, has said that all National Assembly members belonging to the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Group and the Awami National Party have tendered their resignations to their respective leaderships to protest what he called the government's unconstitutional attitude. Addressing a news conference at Parliament House in Islamabad today, he said these resignations will be submitted to the speaker at an appropriate time. He alleged that the government has utilized Mehran Bank funds for political purposes.

Bhutto Calls For Reconciliation

BK2504163894 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] The prime minister has urged the opposition to play its constitutional role and adopt a path of understanding and conciliation in the national interest. Speaking to reporters at Parliament House in Islamabad this evening, Benazir Bhutto asked the opposition to reconsider its decision to boycott the National Assembly proceedings. The government wants the opposition to make decisions in the interest of the people. She said when the Northwest Frontier Province Assembly members elected Pir Sabir Shah as chief minister, the Pakistan People's Party [PPP] accepted the decision. Now that the same members have decided to make Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao leader of the house, the opposition should accept this decision. She emphasized that everybody must follow the Constitution.

Answering a question on the opposition members submitting their resignations to their leaders, the prime minister said the speaker has not received any resignation from any member. She asked the opposition leader not to speak about resignations, but to make efforts at conciliation with the government. In response to another query, Benazir Bhutto said that as prime minister and former opposition leader, I invite the opposition to return to the National Assembly. Answering yet another question, she said democracy is in the hands of the people and there is no danger to it. She said the opposition is taking these steps because it is afraid of action against it. She said that the PPP has been trying to establish the rule of law and hold aloft the rights of the people. Her government has not set up tribunals for disqualification in order to make the opposition the target of a vendetta, as the former government did during its tenure.

Foreign Minister Departs for New York Meeting on Bosnia

BK2504140694 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] The foreign minister, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, has said that Pakistan and ICO [Islamic Conference Organization] have consistently urged the international community, particularly the great powers, to forcefully counter Serbian designs in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In a statement at Islamabad airport today before departure for New York, he said it should be clear by now that the policy of (?appeasement) will not work. He said it is time for the powerful countries, especially those in Europe, to work with the Islamic (?countries) to halt the Serbian aggression. The foreign minister said a solution should now be sought which is consistent with the principles of the UN Charter.

In New York, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali will attend the ICO Contact Group ministerial meeting on situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which is being convened on Pakistan's initiative on Wednesday. He will also address the United Nations Security Council on behalf of the Islamic conference of foreign ministers [as heard] and will lead the ICO ministerial delegation for joint calls on the UN secretary general and the president of the Security Council.

Iraqi Speaker, Parliamentary Delegation Arrives

Parliamentary Talks Begin

JN2504162394 Baghdad INA in English 1445 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] Islamabad, Apr. 25, INA—The parliamentary talks between Pakistan and Iraq began here today.

The talks dealt with bilateral relations and means of boosting them and exchanging visits and expertise in the parliamentary fields.

Head of the Iraqi delegation, Speaker of the National Assembly Sa'di Mahdi Salih explained suffering of the Iraqi people as a result of the unjust blockade, despite Iraq's implementation of its commitments versus the Security Council resolutions.

For his part, Speaker of the Pakistani Parliament Yusuf Raza Gilani voiced his country's government and people concern over plight of the Iraqi people, criticizing the double-standard being pursued by the superpowers on the human rights and handling the international problems.

Senate Chairman Meets Speaker

BK2504154194 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 25 Apr 94

[Text] The Iraqi Speaker Mr. Sa'di Mahdi, met the chairman, Senate, Mr. Wasim Sajjad, in Islamabad today and discussed various issues, including Kashmir. The chairman, Senate, briefed Mr. Sa'di Mahdi Salih on the different aspects of the Kashmir issue and called for its peaceful solution through UN resolutions. Mr. Wasim Sajjad supported resumption of food and medicine supplies to Iraq and said these items should not be subjected to international sanctions. The Iraqi speaker expressed the hope that his current visit to Pakistan would further strengthen cooperation in trade, commerce, and economic sectors.

Bhutto Meets Delegation

BK2604054394 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 26 Apr 94

[Text] The visiting four-member Iraqi delegation, led by National Assembly Speaker Sa'di Mahdi Salih, called on Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto in Islamabad yesterday. They exchanged views on matters of bilateral interest and regional and international issues. The Iraqi speaker commended the steps taken by the Pakistani prime minister for socioeconomic reforms. He hoped that the Islamic countries will end their differences and closely cooperate with each other for the welfare of their people. Ms. Benazir Bhutto paid tribute to the Iraqi people for facing the present difficulties with patience and hoped that Iraq will soon be able to overcome these difficulties. She said Pakistan has always supported the territorial integrity of all countries, and it will welcome normal relations among all Islamic countries.

Air Force Chief Says F-16's 'Not Indispensable'

BK2204121194 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 22 Apr 94 p 1

[Text] Islamabad—Chief of the PAF [Pakistan Air Force] Air Chief Marshal Farooq Feroze Khan has said the F-16 are not indispensable and we do not depend entirely on them for our aerial defence.

"We cannot sacrifice our nuclear programme for these. If we do not get them we have other options and we will make alternate arrangements," he added.

In an exclusive interview with this correspondent at the Air Headquarter, the PAF chief said "we are looking for multi-functional planes which are readily available."

He disagreed with the suggestion that the defence capability of the Air Force will suffer a setback as F-16 have become part of the national psyche and said that we have blown the qualities of the aircraft and of proportion. [sentence as published] He said that although the F-16 was a good plane but it does not mean that our Air Force would be incapacitated without them.

To another question about the possibility of acquiring MiG-2000, SU-27 or MiG-29, the PAF chief said that we should not take hasty decisions on replacing F-16s. "We have to make a choice keeping in view our needs for the next 25 years and considering all technical aspects."

Replying to another question, the Air Chief Marshal said that Mirage-2000-5 was still in its infancy and it would take at least three to four years for this aircraft to roll out of the assembly plant.

He revealed that Taiwan was likely to be the first recipient of the plane in 1998. "Our priority is to opt for the planes which could be delivered immediately," he added.

The Air Chief was of the view that nuclear programme and F-16 were absolutely different issues and these should not be intermingled "Our stand and that of the govt on the issue is similar," he added.

He dismissed the suggestion of kickbacks in defence deals and said that the role of the PAF comes to an end the moment choice of planes is made.

The PAF chief said the defence of Kahuta [nuclear power plant] was in safe hands and keeping in view the probable dangers defence of the vital national project has been made impregnable and so one can dare violate Kahuta air space. [sentence as published]

He said no one wanted war. "Wars take place where diplomacy falls and our diplomacy is moving in the right direction. However if war was thrust on us, we are fully prepared to repulse aggression and are capable of defending the motherland," he added.

He said that the six K-8 trainer aircraft have been acquired from China to fill in the gap created by American T-37 which have been returned after expiry of the lease period.

PRC To Train 60 Chashma Nuclear Plant Operators

BK2604132894 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 26 Apr 94

[Text] Sixty operators of the Chashma Nuclear Power Plant have been inducted into a Chinese training school for basic training in safety measures and maintenance of the plant. Under a contract signed by the two countries, the Chinese Nuclear Corporation is to provide various technical facilities to Pakistani technicians for the smooth operation of the 300-megawatt plant.

Afghan Refugees Continue Inflow Despite Restrictions

BK2604104094 Islamabad THE NATION in English 26 Apr 94 p 12

[Text] Islamabad—For every Afghan refugee leaving Pakistan two are entering the country. Latest UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) statistics show that an estimated 11,710 Afghans entered Pakistan between April 1 to April 16, while a total of 4,992 Afghans repatriated.

Of the 11,710 crossing over to Pakistan, only 721 persons entered with passports.

UNHCR says its border monitors observed 455 Afghan families (comprising 2,836 persons), as well as 3,720 single persons, arriving via Torkham on humanitarian grounds in first half of the month.

According to UNHCR the total number of Afghans who entered Pakistan in March was 21,178.

Officially entry to Pakistan for Afghans is still restricted to those with valid documents, or to those allowed to cross over on humanitarian grounds.